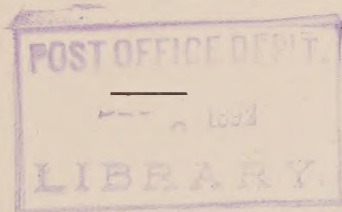


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POEMS:

By JAMES PETER McCORD.



PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR.
1889.

THE END OF THE WORLD

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PREFACE.

THE poems contained in this little book have been produced at intervals during a period which covers more than half a century. Some of them were written for the young ; those in particular which are in the form of fables. Nearly all have been published in newspapers and magazines. They were not written for the critics, but for people of plain common sense. They are here presented together, with the hope that they may afford some entertainment and instruction to those into whose hands they may come.

J. P. M.

WAVERLY, Iowa.

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POEMS.

THE CHANGE.

ONCE, with a proud and careless heart
I trod these earthly ways,
Unskilled in that celestial art
Which turns all things to praise ;
Yet to my lips the truth would start,
Wherever turned my gaze—
There must be One, whose wisdom planned,
Whose power produced the world, so good,
so grand.

When spring, awake, o'er hill and vale
Her mantling greenness threw,
And blossoms sweetened every gale
Which through the orchards blew,
I went the purple morn to hail,
And bathe my feet in dew ;
While birds their cheerful music poured,
And swollen brooks along the valleys roared.

I loved in summer's sultry hours
To seek some still retreat,
Where dripping springs and leafy bowers
Repelled the searching heat ;
Where moss and ferns and simple flowers
Grew coyly round my feet :
I marked them well, each form, each hue,
With every line that careful Nature drew.

When night set all her lights aglow,
And half restored the day,
I left the shadowy scenes below
And trod an upper way ;
I saw the orbs in order go
Beneath a mighty sway—
The sway of one ordaining Will ;
But who to me seemed dim and distant still.

There came a change : the Power divine,
In old Creation known,
Formed in this deadened soul of mine
Some likeness to his own ;
Then all the world began to shine
As it had never shone :
There opened round a realm of love,
With light and sweetness falling from above.

I saw new beauties on the earth,
 New glories in the sky ;
 Things dull before, or little worth,
 Grew brighter to my eye ;
 While every bird that sang its mirth
 Sent sweeter notes on high :
 It was my Father's world I trod—
 My Father's, Savior's—dearest names of God.
 1836.

AT THE GRAVE OF A HUMBLE CHRISTIAN.

[Hannah Hobbie, of Dutchess Co., N. Y., confined to the house by poor health for many years. A life of her was published by the American Tract Society. I visited her grave about the year 1836. There may be in the lines a little too much youthful enthusiasm.]

Not o'er the graves of bards alone,
 Whose harps with sweetest numbers flow,
 In loving homage shall be strown
 The fairest flowers that bloom below ;
 Nor pilgrims shall alone repair
 To where memorial piles arise,
 And pomp and gilded lines declare
 That there the dust of heroes lies.

For real worth, though born obscure,
And unambitious of a name,
May yet a lofty place secure
Among the names advanced to fame ;
For real worth has still its charms
For every just and generous breast,
And, when in sleep it folds its arms,
They venerate its place of rest.

So, hither, with that reverent awe
Which steals o'er all on sacred ground,
The Christian foot shall often draw,
To stand beside this hallowed mound,
Where one has sunk to deep repose
Who lived a life, through weary years,
That still afar its fragrance throws,
And other lonely sufferers cheers.

Bowed o'er his staff, with tottering tread
I see an ancient pilgrim come ;
The hoary locks that wreath his head
Presage his nearness to the tomb.
One hope has borne him from a vale
That smiles beneath a distant sky—
Once more, before his flesh shall fail,
To muse where these dear ashes lie.

While memory, with her magic glass,
Brings back the years in long review,
One picture, more than all that pass,
Has power to move him and subdue—
Her humble chamber, where the young
Sat round her on the holy day,
While with a soft and fervent tongue
She taught them in the heavenly way.

I see some future bard appear ;
He bears a harp and little scroll ;
He reads, admires, yet drops a tear
Of pity o'er a stricken soul.
His harp awakes : the life of faith,
The grace which in the Christian reigns,
And even gives him joy in death,
Inspire and warm his glowing strains.

For me, I love this cooling shade,
Where, on a grassy couch reclined,
There comes no tumult to invade
The solemn calm that fills my mind.
I love this light amid the tombs,
These flowers which rise and open here ;
For light, and every flower that blooms,
Are tokens of a brighter sphere.

Oh, might this spot instruct my days,
This lowly saint inflame my zeal,
And while my song prolongs her praise,
My life some kindred worth reveal !
If blessings with our wishes came,
I would not ask for more than this :
Like hers, untarnished be my name ;
Like hers, eternal be my bliss !

1836.

TO BENEVOLENCE.

ALL hail, angelic power ! whose arms infold
The wide creation in their warm embrace ;
Whose wakeful eyes the teeming lands behold,
And glow with love to every various race.

Pure love to men, where'er their dwellings lie,
Spontaneous kindles in thy generous breast ;
Set free from self, thy feet with ardor fly
To bless them all, as thou thyself art blest.

To pallid want, lone in his humble shed,
Thy liberal hand affords the just relief ;
In weary vigils soothes the aching head,
And wipes away the bitter tear of grief.

The tattered outcast, whom the proud would
jeer,

Or frown unaided from their pompous doors,
Relates his story in thy willing ear,
And freely shares the blessings of thy stores.

Where victims of debasing vice appear,
Untaught in pure religion's pleasant ways,
They find, how soon! thy gracious presence
near,
Prompt to instruct, and pleased the base to
raise.

Amid the prison's gloom and tainted air,
Like some fair orb thy brow benignant shines,
And makes each cell a brighter aspect wear
To those poor sufferers whom their guilt
confines.

Unlike the men in golden fetters bound,
Whose griping hands no grateful hearts can
bless,
Thy gifts, dispersed, awaken joy around,
Like springs that rise to pilgrims in distress.

Each painful blow, each wrong that impious
power
Inflicts upon the vassals of his will,

Wounds also thee ; yet dost thou dread the
hour

When God for this his judgment shall fulfill.

Thy pity moves to every stupid throng

Who bend their knees to senseless wood and
stone ;

Who to dead ears their cries for help prolong,
Or with self-tortures for their guilt atone.

As evening dews refresh the drooping flower,
And raise its head to greet the morning ray,
Thy smiles, thy help, in one's unhappy hour,
Revive his soul to hope a better day.

Thy works, thy sacrifices, are repaid—

In blessing others thou thyself art blest :
No lowliest service to the Master paid
But has sweet recompense within the breast.

Oh, fair of brow, and sweet with every grace,
Born from above and destined to the skies,
How dead were I, if, gazing on thy face,
I felt no flame of kindling love arise.

Oh, come, pure spirit, robed in white array,
Be thou through life a guide and teacher near ;
So bring my heart beneath thy gentle sway
That I may have for all a feeling tear. 1836.

TIME.

TIME hastens by, nor ever makes a halt ;
It waits not on the trifler, who delays
To do his duties in their proper turn ;
It calls for action, prompt and resolute,
Lest, in the sluggishness within us born,
Or in our thoughtlessness, we lose a day.
And who can measure such a loss? A day!
It is a link in that still lengthening chain
Which runs through all the ages, and how much
Is hanging on it not a mortal knows ;
None but the Infinite, who sees the end
From the beginning, can such knowledge claim.
To lose a day may be to lose the chance—
The only chance which Providence will give—
To seize some earthly prize, to make our lives
A grand success. On one brief, fleeting day
May hang the issues of eternity.
To lose a day may be to lose the soul—
To miss the only time which God appoints
To break the charms of earth, and turn the
thoughts
To those high themes which touch the future
world.

They, then, are wisest of the human race
Who seize the moments as they speed along,
And press them into service ; fixed in will
To make this life achieve its proper end—
To round it out with good and worthy deeds.
How much beyond our words, beyond our
thoughts,
Needs to be done in such a sphere as this—
Not for the welfare of our mortal part
Alone, but for the part which can not die !
To make, besides all this, our humble lives,
In ways ingenious charity can find,
A benediction to the world around.

2
Is, then, the law so vigorous and hard ?
Ought we to be forever on the stretch ;
Our years all bustle, or a ceaseless round
Of hard exertion, or of hand or brain ?
May not some little spaces be unfilled ;
Some hours be vacant, be to pleasure given ?
Our Master bids us work, and with our might,
Yet does not ask that we should work as slaves,
Or wear ourselves to nerveless skeletons.
Our cares, our burdens, we may cast aside ;
May seek for rest, and for amusement, too,
When our exhausted natures make the claim ;

Yet even in amusement we should still
Serve God, with all his gracious bonds in view;
Should so relax, and so refresh, our powers
As to restore their wonted spring and force,
That we our burdens may the better bear;
That we may live more strongly than before,
And work with greater ease and freshened zeal.

Up, O my soul! No longer dream, or act
As if this life were but an aimless halt
Before eternity. Arouse, and live!
Go forth, and sow! if thou shalt not have time
To reap the harvest, then some other may.
The longest stretch of years allowed to man
Is short, and how exposed to rupture, too!
Some sudden blow may break the brittle thread
Which holds me here, and drop me out of sight.
But if my work has been well done; if I
Have sowed and planted while the sun has
shone—

Have finished all the tasks my Master planned
For me to do—why need I dread the stroke
That cuts me off! why should I be averse
To part from all I hold the dearest here,
And pass beyond the boundaries of time!
My Father's time and way are always best.
1833. Rewritten 1886.

THE SONG OF THE ANGELS.

THE stars were glowing in the crown of night,
While shepherds watched their flocks at Bethle-
hem.

They talked of Abraham, and how his faith
Could slay the son on whom the promise hung ;
Or talked of Moses, that unequaled chief
Whose word sent terror through old Egypt ;
who

From God's own hand received the holy law ;
Who led the chosen tribes a weary way
Across the desert ; or their talk arose
To that high theme which thrilled Isaiah's soul—
The great Messiah, who should break their
bonds

And set them free ; whose advent must be near,
As all the scribes declared. In sweet discourse
As thus they whiled away the lagging hours,
And while their hearts were warming with their
theme,

And happier days seemed nearing to their
hopes,

A sudden light fell on the world around,
A light that seemed an overflow of heaven.
The shepherds shook with terror as they gazed ;
Then came an angel's voice : " Be not afraid.

Behold, I bring you tidings of great joy ;
To you is born this day, in David's town,
A Savior, Christ the Lord ; whom ye shall find
In swaddling clothes, and in a manger laid."

At once a host of angels filled the air,
And sang : "Glory to God in highest heaven,
And peace on earth, good will to men." That
song

Fell sweetly on the night, and echoing far,
Grew mute among Judea's startled hills.
Yet is that song still living ; all the world
Has heard it ; down the ages it has come,
With benedictions to the souls of men.

No words have ever come to human ears—
From even angel-tongues—more sweet than
these,

More burdened with profound and blest import.
They bear the tidings of a Savior's birth,
And open to the soul the gospel day.
The Christ has come ! the Christ—the Man, the
God—

The Wonderful ; above, and sundered far
From all who ever wore our mortal robe,
Or trod our common earth ; as pure as light,
As spotless as the holiness of heaven.
His truth, his love, his tender sympathy,

Broke forth in deeds ; became embodied forms,
With breath and zeal and tireless energy ;
His life a constant overflow of good
To men and women in their various needs ;
His sum of years one rounded, perfect whole,
Light glowing all along the way he went.
His work was great ; how far beyond the power
Of any highest creature to achieve !
Yet had he finished all—had fully done
His Father's will—when came the fearful end.
His foes have sifted him with all the skill
Their hatred could command ; have weighed his
words,
Have searched his deeds, if haply they might
find
Some mote to blame ; yet have they been con-
strained,
As was the vacillating Roman judge,
To say : “ *We find in him no fault at all* ”
Behold him, then, a pure and perfect Man,
A Model set before the eyes of all,
The grandest figure on the stage of Time.

The angels sang of “ peace, good will ; ” yet
now,
So many ages since, how great a lack

Of concord, brotherhood, among mankind !
How many hate each other, with a hate
That better would befit a devil race !
The nearest kin are often greatest foes ;
No foes more bitter, more malicious, none
Whose tongues inflict more deep and lasting
wounds.

How many serve themselves, with slight regard
To other's wishes, or to other's rights !
Their native selfishness, allowed, indulged,
Grows stronger on the nourishment it gets,
Until it overcomes and throttles down
Their better selves—poor weaklings at the best.
Some hide the blemishes in what they sell,
Or dust, with specious talk, the buyer's eyes.
Some overreach in barter, and because
They cheat a trusting neighbor, bless them-
selves

For their superior judgment, shrewdness, tact.
Some, whom the world has favored, use the
power

Their riches gives them, less to help the poor
Than to oppress and grind them ; doling out
But dimes for service hard, and faithful too,
When justice well might claim a larger wage.

Some watch for those to whom misfortune
comes,

And on them pounce, as on a lawful prey,
To wring some profit from them ; heeding not
The woe upon extortioners pronounced,
Nor that dread hour, not far away, when death
Will drive them hence with nothing in their
hands.

The gains of hard oppression, or of fraud,
Seem not enough for others ; they would own
The men themselves—their very flesh and
bones ;

Would lash them to their toils, and turn to gold
Their sweat, and all the vigor of their limbs ;
Would sell, or buy, their fellow-men like cattle,
Dumb, heedless, or as if their flesh were stone ;
As if they had no souls to think, or feel,
Or burn with indignation at their wrong.

Some love their country well ; so well, indeed,
That they are willing to resign their ease—
To turn from all the dear delights of home
To serve her, even in some humble place.
Though deep their love of country, as they
claim,

Their love of self, no doubt, is deeper still.
They seek some office for their country's sake,

But more, much more, for their own honor,
gain.

When once their eyes are fixed upon the place,
How shamelessly they scramble, push, and
toil

To reach it; with what care they face two ways
On questions of the hour, to win support
From every side! Nor does it much offend
Their moral sense, to put their rivals down
By defamation, trickery—and lies.

Success must be obtained—success atones
For every wrong committed—but, perhaps,
It can not keep the conscience long asleep.
Oh, from these human hearts, depraved, per-
verse,

And passionate, how many evils spring,
As deadly waters rise from poisoned wells!
There's wrong and discord still within our
homes,

Along our streets, among the nations, too;
Though long ago the gospel was proclaimed.
For, whence are wars and fightings? Come they
not

From these same wicked hearts? from love of
fame,

From avarice, from selfishness, from pride?

Some trivial wrong, some act misunderstood,
Or willfully distorted, stirs the blood
Of peoples who had else remained at peace,
And makes them fierce to try their strength in
arms.

And then what horrors—woes! The earth
drinks blood

Like common water; fields, in pasture rich,
Or for the reaping ripe, are trodden down
To utter desolation; while, afar,
Great waves of sorrow beat, for fathers, sons,
And lovers hurried to untimely death.

How far away seems that delightful day
When Peace shall be the power that rules the
world!

When all the scenes and miseries of war
Shall be reviewed with horror and disgust!
Yet that delightful day is sure to come:
The ancient prophets saw its dawn, its noon,
And wrote the vision down. Their word shall
stand:

Men yet shall see, not in the future far,
But present in the world around them—all,
Yea, all the glories which the prophets saw
In dimness down the ages; shall see all

The nations gathering in the fruits of peace ;
All tribes, all races, living in good will.

Day follows day ; so, in the plan of God,
Event succeeds event in settled course.
Thus all his promises fit in their place,
And reach in turn their time to be fulfilled.
The prophets saw the golden days remote,
The angels saw them nearer, and announced
Their hastening dawn. The promised Christ
had come—

Had come to be the Savior of the world.
Salvation ! What a word is this ! What mind
Can take it in, in all its depth and breadth ?
To know it, in the vastness of its sense,
Our souls must feel the miseries of sin—
Its deep unrest, the pangs of guilt, remorse ;
Must live in fear of judgment ; plunge to hell,
And, fully conscious still of all the past,
Live on, and on, and on, among the lost :
Then be released from all ; from both the guilt
And power of sin ; and taste the peace, the joy
Of sin forgiven ; must learn to walk with God,
And lean on him in every hour of need ;
Must enter heaven, and through long ages
dwell
Among the saints, beneath the smile of God.

We thus might find how much salvation means.
And even now, with powers so weak and dull,
Salvation looks to us more than all else ;
Far more than riches, honors, all the world.
It frees us from ourselves and gives us Christ—
What more could we desire in earth or heaven ?
Oh, for this gift, this gift unspeakable !
What gratitude should kindle in our hearts,
And find expression in our daily lives ;
Held to his service by such ties, so strong,
So sacred, that no charms of time or sense,
No powers of earth, could break them or disturb,

We so would glorify our Lord. The more
His life, his spirit, come into our own
And show before the world, so much the more
The world will honor him, his name, his cause.
Whate'er our rank, we represent him here,
And should take care to fill our office well.

“ Glory to God ”—was sung at Bethlehem :
Glory to him shall be the end, the crown,
Of all his schemes. The gospel of his Son
Exalts his mercy, and his justice, too.
Then let the universe—all tribes below

With all the throngs above—unite in praise
“To him who is, who was, and is to come—
To him upon the throne, and to the Lamb,
Be blessing, honor, glory, evermore.”

1835.

Rewritten 1886.

THE BIRD'S NEST.

ONE morning in the early spring,
While all the air was sweet,
I saw two robins quit the wing
And in an arbor meet.

Why each thus sought the other's side
Was in a moment clear—
The secret lovers try to hide
They make the more appear.

They thought not then of morning hymns,
Nor flights on leisure wings;
From heart to heart among the limbs,
There passed the tenderest things.

For soon, as if together bound,
With one sweet purpose filled,
They searched among the trees around
To find a place to build.

They chose a maple's modest height
Half up a gentle slope,
Where fields and orchards pleased the sight,
And raised the owner's hope.

With equal zeal the happy pair
At once their task began ;
Each hair and fibre, sought with care,
They wrought into their plan

While, tireless, as they went and came,
The curious fabric grew,
I wondered what within their frame
Could guide their aims so true.

Could reason, man's superior lot,
However trained and skilled,
Have taught to choose a fairer spot,
Or better how to build ?

At length the meek and patient wife
Broods on the burdened nest,
Until each egg is warmed to life,
And brings a little guest.

The parents feed the nestlings well,
And make them grow and thrive,
Until they think them—(need I tell ?)—
The prettiest birds alive.

To every nest there comes a day
When those within it reared
Turn each to take a different way,
And leave the home endeared.

When first the fledgelings try their wings,
Their longest flights are short ;
They flutter down—the timorous things—
Like stones without support.

But where the old ones lead the way,
Attempting oft to fly,
They learn at length their wings to play,
And hold their course on high.

May peace and concord thus abide
At every human door ;
Let parents thus their offspring guide,
And teach their souls to soar.

1850.

THE DOOM OF A PET.

[A pet cock which I once owned was very gentle and peaceable. He would at any time eat from my hand, and suffer me to stroke his fine, glossy feathers. When, however, it became necessary for me to remove him from his native place to another locality, he seemed to leave some of his excellent qualities behind him; for he now became quarrelsome, and was ready to fight with any of his neighbors that might approach him. I therefore reluctantly decided that the best thing I could do was to take off his head. Yet my feelings were so much interested in the matter that I could not dismiss it without writing the following elegy.]

My bird, with mild, expressive mien,
His feelings frankly telling,
No more shall roam the sunny green,
With conscious beauties swelling.

No more, with loud and piercing horn,
At depth of night delight me,
Nor at the blush of rosy morn
To walk abroad invite me.

No more approach with hungry beak,
Nor perch upon my shoulder;
More shrewd and cunning every week,
As weekly he grew older.

Beneath our cares and sorrows bent,
Too prone to yield to sadness,
The birds of earth and air are sent
To fill our hearts with gladness.

Deem not their notes, their glancing wings,
Mere idle noise and flutter;
For they, with other living things,
May all some lessons utter.

Who would inflict a needless pain
On tribes that so befriend us,
Or grudge them shares in fruit and grain
Which kindly seasons send us.

Did we our gentler feelings show
To harmless creatures near us,
They, too, to milder moods would grow,
And love us more than fear us.

Judge not the love misplaced and vain
That to a bird was given;
The lowest link of love's great chain
Helps lift its length to heaven.

It were indeed a base extreme,
For vices that o'ercame him,
To thrust him out from all esteem,
And cease with praise to name him.

I would his vulgar passions fly,
 Lest some dread doom should reach me;
I would his nobler actions eye,
 And live as they would teach me.

Oh, could I, with a heart as gay,
 With full contentment beating,
Around this fair creation stray,
 And all with kindness greeting. 1850.

EARTHLY ATTACHMENTS.

THERE'S not a tie that binds the heart,
 If round a thing of earth it cling,
But will at times a pang impart,
 But will at times the bosom wring.

Our love goes out to various forms
 That share with us this beauteous sphere ;
While thus some soft endearment warms,
 It lends a charm to being here.

The few whose smiles return our own,
 The souls with kindred feelings twined,
Are not the gifts of heaven alone
 That weave enchantments round the mind.

The birds that harbor near our door,
That glean their food beside our board,
And all day long their music pour,
Have power to thrill a tender chord.

We draw delight from vocal bowers ;
We praise their sweets, we love their shade ;
Nor can our memory lose the hours
When in our native walks we strayed.

If, far removed, our thoughts return,
Those cherished walks to trace anew,
As former pleasures rise and burn,
We feel the pains of absence, too.

While from our side we miss the loved
Who trod with us the smiling green,
'Tis but a grief too often proved,
That this is all a changeful scene.

The warblers cease, the blossoms fade,
All nature in its season dies ;
So transient mortals sink to shade,
And leave the world to fruitless sighs.

There's not a tie that binds the heart,
If round a form of time it cling,
But forces oft a tear to start,
Or will at times the bosom wring.

Yet ties there are which can not fail,
Sweet memories which forever glow ;
A love, when fairer climes we hail,
Which shall with endless raptures flow.

1850.

THE DESERTED COTTAGE.

[A. D. 1800, a colony from Connecticut settled in the northern part of Bradford Co., Pa. The Rev. Salmon King became their minister—a plain, primitive man, of strong mind, but a little eccentric. He preached at first in a log school-house, then in a frame church, erected at the edge of a pleasant grove. After his death the small, unpainted house in which he had lived with his family was unoccupied and went to decay; but his memory is fragrant in all that region, and the influence of his life will be everlasting.]

ONCE the tread of human feet
Echoed in this still retreat ;
Children round their parents grew,
As the times and seasons flew ;
Old and young in one were bound,
And of *home* the meaning found.

All that mortals feel and know
Hither came, with varying flow :
Sorrow dropped her tears like rain ;
Pleasure thrilled in every vein ;
Hope around her anchor clung ;
Faith her trust and triumph sung.

Though the world not much bestowed,
Life was not a cheerless road ;
For, for every favor lent,
Hearty thanks were upward sent,
And content, with even breast,
Came to lodge, a constant guest.

Rural sounds assailed the ear ;
Plowmen urged the lagging steer ;
Woodmen rang the cutting steel ;
Softer fingers hummed the wheel ;
While the pastor, deep in thought,
Arrows for his quiver wrought.

O'er the grounds, at hush of day,
Musingly he strolled away ;
While the cool and balmy breeze
Whispered in his cherished trees ;
While the calm, the glorious west,
Shadowed forth the coming rest.

In the perfect days of June,
Maidens, with the month in tune,
Gathered blossoms in the glade,
Sported in the orchard's shade,
Or, around the rising lines,
Deftly trained their erring vines.

Here, when cheerful morning came,
Here, around the evening flame,
All with reverent spirit heard
Readings from the Sacred Word,
Then in prayer together knelt,
Pleading for the needs they felt.

When the day of rest returned—
Rest beloved, and duly earned—
All the group, with cheerful face,
Sought yon pleasant holy place,
Whither, from each winding road,
Streams of rural people flowed.

Still the months, on passing wing,
On the scene their beauties fling ;
But there moves not here a form
With a throb of pleasure warm ;
None to mark, above, below,
What the works of God can show.

All in other homes apart,
Or asleep with pulseless heart.
Now the trees vain shadows throw,
Plants, untended, idly grow,
Weeds, intrusive, gain the door,
Opened for a foot no more.

Crumbling walls and falling boards—
So old Time his work records.
Fearless of a tenant nigh,
Swallows in the windows fly,
Twitter fondly o'er their young,
Here, where cradle hymns were sung.

Is there then for pride a place
In the bosoms of our race?
Ruin seizes on our works;
Ruin in our bodies lurks;
We must fail, our structures fall,
Earth and rubbish cover all.

Yet like him, the man of God
Who these silent spaces trod,
We may leave our lives behind
Sweet with deeds of purest kind;
Doom and death we may defy—
God's true servants never die.

Though our bodies may decay,
We ourselves pass not away;
In some other lives we live,
And a gracious impulse give;
Still we strengthen, lead, and show
Where the feet of men should go.

Let us each our places fill
With a prompt and earnest will ;
Do the good that may be done,
Till descends our setting sun :
Then we rest—the promise stands—
In the house not made with hands. 1851.

WHEN I WAS YOUNG.

WHEN I was young 'twas not as now—
The look of life was fair,
The world moved on, I asked not how,
And brought me less of care.

A clearer light was in the days,
The earth wore deeper green,
And wheresoe'er I turned my gaze
More brilliant was the scene.

The birds were robed in fairer vests,
And flew on swifter wing,
Had stranger skill to build their nests,
And louder throats to sing.

The brook in which the willows dipped,
With softer murmurs flowed ;
The rocks from which the water dripped,
A fresher draught bestowed.

There's not a spot my boyhood knew,
A meadow, grove or hill,
That can its former charms renew,
Or wake as glad a thrill.

Beneath the oaks, whose ample shade
Was near the school-house thrown,
A higher pulse within me played
Than since my breast has known.

There in the open hearts of youth
Abiding friendships sprung,
For hearts had purer love and truth
When mine with theirs was young.

We meet no more as laughing mates,
For all have older grown;
Each carries now some heavier weights,
And fights his way alone.

Deep shadows, too, are round the door
Where first I saw the light—
But sighs can not the dead restore,
Nor severed ties unite.

The years have brought my feet to stand
Where other prospects rise;
Have rudely crushed the schemes I planned,
And turned my hopes to sighs.

I seem like one whom pleasing dreams
Have left to vain regret ;
Like one to whom a meteor's beams
Have all in darkness set.

Did heaven indulge each fond desire,
Nor wring one bitter tear,
What human heart would once aspire
To gain a better sphere ?

The world is fair, and full of proof
That God is good to all ;
On every field and sheltering roof
His daily blessings fall.

But half its charms are lost to me,
It does not give me rest ;
How can the stars, the earth, the sea,
Make deathless spirits blest ?

But though I can no longer feel
As when untried and young,
Yet while these changes o'er me steal
Let silence bind my tongue.

I see in all a Father's hand,
Whose pleasure is supreme ;
Nor dare I ask to understand
The mysteries of his scheme.

I would not brood o'er present ill,
Nor vanished joys deplore ;
I have some solid pleasures still,
And pray and hope for more.

Though griefs may yet before me lie,
Let time its course pursue ;
The hour is near when tears shall dry,
And life begin anew.

1851.

“GOD SAVE THE UNION.”

[Suggested by the agitation growing out of the admission of Texas into the Union, when there seemed to be some danger of its dissolution.]

SAVE, O God, our happy Union !
By our patriot sires begun,
In their deepest bosoms cherished,
Dear to every worthy son.
Save our Union
Till the latest years have run.

Pleasant is a quiet dwelling,
Where is heard no word unkind—
Parents, children, loving, tender,
One in heart, and one in mind.
God, our Union
Thus in long affection bind.

As a bound to States asunder
May no mountain ever stand;
May our broad and mighty rivers
Water one outspreading land.
On our nation,
God, the gifts of peace command.

Long our striped and star-lit banner
O'er the free its shadow fling;
Long our eagle, decked with garlands,
Plume a bold and fearless wing;
Long our Union,
Safety, comfort, glory, bring.

Should the base, the proud, aspiring,
Strike to break our bonds apart,
God, with lightning smite their banners,
Light and love within them dart,
Till our country
Shall not nurse a faithless heart.

Who could wish for lands more favored,
Or for hearthstones more secure?
Who would not rejoice in freedom
Broad alike to rich and poor—
Yet not freedom
Which can lawlessness endure?

Broad between the sounding oceans
See our glorious realm repose !
Here our garner's stored with plenty ;
Here the light of science glows ;
While the gospel
Wide around its brightness throws.

God, still bless our happy Union !

By our fathers' valor won ;
Dear to us as life and fortune,
Blessing all, as does the sun,
Live our Union
Till the latest years have run.

1851.

MY BOYHOOD.

THE years of the past
Their memories cast
On all the long ways we pursue ;
The days that were glad,
The hours that were sad,
Return, and we live them anew.

The home of my youth,
Where kindness and truth
In brothers and sisters I found,
Maintains the hearth-blaze
As in the old days,
To cheer the full household around.

The trees at the door
Are there as before,
And the oak still stands by the spring ;
The orchard in bloom
Still sheds its perfume,
While robins and orioles sing.

The fields on the plain,
In clover and grain,
I view in the glow of the morn ;
When noontide is near,
I listen to hear
The call of the loud dinner-horn.

With all my old mates,
With books and with slates,
I enter the school in the knoll ; 572
I see every face
Around in its place,
And notice whatever is droll.

With laughter and shout
Rung merrily out,
We played by the willow and oak ;
In fields, in the wood,
Where lofty rocks stood,
Our voices the echoes awake. 0

When winter came round,
We studded the ground
With giants or horses of snow ;
Or, arranged for a fight,
We hurled with our might
Cold balls on the ranks of the foe.

Oh, when to those days
I turn a fond gaze,
The wish on my mind will intrude,
That back I could roll
Life's various scroll,
To have my blithe boyhood renewed.

Like birds when they sing,
Or spread a glad wing,
I scarcely was conscious of joy ;
In pleasures refined,
In gifts of the mind,
The man is more blest than the boy.

Our hearts may make gay
Each stage of our way,
If truthful, unselfish, and pure ;
To brighten each hour,
Some sweet little flower
Our diligent search may secure.

WILLIE ON A STICK.

THE school is out, the children free,
Their lessons vex no more ;
With bound and laugh and noisy glee
Around the green they pour.
Some chase their balls and some their hoops,
Some wrestle, pull, and kick,
Some circle down in friendly groups,
While Willie mounts a stick.

There's not a sorrow in his heart,
No anxious doubt or fear ;
Or if at times a woe-drop start,
'Tis childhood's transient tear.
A bird ne'er questions as it sings,
Where next a meal to pick ;
So, too, no care in Willie springs—
Content to ride a stick.

He seems a thing of gladness thrown
On time's mysterious shore ;
A light till now has round him shone,
A light is still before.
While hope along his flowery way
High waves her flaming wick,
No frisking lamb can feel as gay
As Willie on a stick.

His noble forehead tells a tale,
His guileless glances speak ;
A smile that never seems to fail
Is dimpled on his cheek.
A meaning, too, is in his tread,
Majestic, firm and quick ;
His budding traits may thus be read,
In how he rides a stick.

These budding traits of heart and mind
Will strengthen more and more,
As ripened fruits we look to find
Where blossoms stood before.
His prompt resolve, to virtue true,
Will spurn each knavish trick,
As guileless then, as gentle, too,
As when he rode a stick.

And should he bear in life's career
Some high and shining part,
With burning words delight the ear,
Or soothe the aching heart ;
While muttered praises round him swell,
And honors cluster thick,
Some hoary man with pride may tell—
‘I saw him ride a stick.’

Ah, then, perchance, when life is found
Less sweet than childhood dreams,
When human hearts prove not as sound
As trusting childhood deems ;
When hopes deferred, and care, and pain,
Have made him sad and sick,
He'll sigh to be a boy again
Careering on a stick.

1851.

THE DYING BOY.

[These lines were written on the death of a pupil of mine in Bradford Co., Pa. When near his end he complained of being cold, and requested his father to lie down by his side.]

COME, my father, lie beside me,
All my limbs are strangely cold ;
With thy kindly arm around me,
Closely to thy bosom fold.

Never stole such feelings o'er me,
Never throbbed my heart so wild ;
How could flesh more deeply suffer ?
Help, O father, help thy child.

Heaven on earth is smiling sweetly,
Softened airs my chamber fill,
Love in ample folds has wrapped me ;
Yet I feel a coldness still.

Nearer, father, nestle nearer,
Let thy heart beat warm to mine;
Bonds of love that soon must sever,
Closer draw and intertwine.

If my work on earth is finished,
Let eternal scenes appear;
Christ's eternal arm beneath me,
What can move my soul to fear?

Though our tender ties must sunder,
Tempered be your grief for me;
Lo, a fairer world is dawning,
From all sin and sorrow free.

He whose precious blood has washed me,
With his glories lights the place;
Shining wings that do his pleasure
Wait to bear me near his face.

Weep o'er me no tears of sadness—
Tears are for the lost alone;
All should join in hallelujahs,
Who have kindred round the throne.

THE DEAD BABE.

[A real incident.]

THE woods had changed to sombre hue,
The summer birds afar had flown,
When forth from home, in chilling dew,
A little maiden ran alone.

As on a stranger whom she met
She turned a sad, bewildered look,
He saw her cheeks with teardrops wet,
While all her frame with feeling shook.

A wish to speak was in her face,
And when he smiled away her dread,
She nearer drew a little space
And told her tale—"The baby's dead."

She thought all human hearts could feel
And enter into others' woes;
That tears from other eyes would steal,
If she her sorrow should disclose.

She knew no world besides her own—
A little world within a cot,
Where kindred hearts in one had grown,
And made a sweet and sunny spot.

But now the household pet had died ;
The care that watched his couch of pain,
The arts which fond affection tried,
Could not his parting soul detain.

He goes to scenes more bright and fair,
While stricken hearts are left below ;
Nor time, that hardest rocks can wear,
Shall ever quite efface their woe.

No more his breath shall warm their cheek ;
His shout of welcome ring no more ;
Yet e'en his vacant chair shall speak,
And silent rooms his form restore.

His mother, with an aching breast,
Will lay his cup and rattle by ;
Nor will her fingers on them rest
In years to come, without a sigh.

Yet sweet the solace : that the hands
Which used these silent toys to hold,
Now clasp amid the heavenly bands,
A sweetly-sounding harp of gold.

Oft as the spring renews the ground,
His sister, at the close of day,
Will go to dress his grassy mound,
And fragrant wreaths above him lay.

Should then a stranger wander near,
He might, in reverence, turn aside,
Or if he paused to drop a tear,
His cheeks would be the soonest dried.

Alas ! in many a home and heart
Are sorrows to the world unknown,
And deeper is the pain, the smart,
Because they must be borne alone.

Those are the darkest rooms of earth,
And there the bitterest tears are shed,
Where cease the sounds of childish mirth,
Where it is said: "*The babe is dead.*"

1852.

CONTENTMENT.

[Founded on an incident published in a newspaper.]

THE night was dire; the storm was loud,
And swept the naked fields in wrath;
The mighty trees before it bowed,
And shivered branches strewed its path.

The cabin, where, amid the vale,
A mother braved her lot severe,
In all its timbers felt the gale,
And quivered like a thing in fear.

While dimly round the narrow room
A candle threw its flickering ray,
Her look and voice relieved the gloom
That on her cowering children lay.

The box was rude, and filled with straw,
In which she laid them down to rest:
More costly beds they often saw,
A costlier bed they never pressed.

Yet had she taught their lips to bless
The Source whence every comfort flows;
For others might be favored less,
Or suffer deeper wants and woes

One thoughtful child put forth his head
And, listening to the pelting storm,
“Oh, what will children do,” he said,
“Who have no straw to keep them warm?”

Some, on their soft, luxurious beds,
Review the day's successful schemes;
Of other schemes arrange the threads,
And grasp at riches in their dreams.

If others have no thirst for more,
They take the gifts around them strown,
With scarce a thought of those whose store
Is but a crumb beside their own.

How blest, like Paul, to feel a calm
That ruffles at no hard event!
“*In whatsoever state I am,*”
Said he, “*I’ve learned to be content.*”

1854.

BIRDS* WITHOUT CARE.

WHEN groves are green and skies are warm
The birds in pleasure live,
Nor to the time of frost and storm
One anxious moment give.

Yet when the wintry days prevail,
The birds that with us stay,
Find shelter from the storms that wail,
And food for every day.

While God, so great above us all,
Makes mighty worlds his care!
There's not a sparrow, lone and small,
But does his notice share.

For birds—and not for man alone—
He brings the summer round,
Spreads verdure o'er our happy zone,
And makes the fruits abound.

Thus they, without distressing care,
By Nature's steady ways,
Still find enough for daily fare,
Through all the barren days.

Then why our anxious thoughts and words
About the coming day?
Our Father clothes and feeds the birds,
And we are more than they.

While sun and stars are overhead,
His goodness shall endure;
His promise gives us daily bread,
And makes our water sure.

1856.

THE FIRST BIRD OF SPRING.

FROM yonder tree a robin's song
Falls sweetly on my ear,
With all the notes her skill can reach
She hails the opening year.

Thou, gentle bird, with daring flight
To northern climes hast come,
Ere forests wear their robes of green,
Or orchards show their bloom

Yet welcome to our homes and fields,
Here cheer the days with song ;
Nor fear, at my approaching steps,
That thou shalt suffer wrong.

How base the hand that on a bird
Inflicts a needless pain ;
That wantonly strikes out a life
It can not give again.

Sing on, sweet bird, in spite of man
Thou hast a right to sing ;
To flit at will from bough to bough,
Or skyward spread thy wing.

Soon warmer suns and genial showers
Shall bless the waiting ground ;
In verdure clothe the hills and dales,
And spread new charms around.

Sing on, sweet bird, thy all of life
Is but a transient hour ;
Sing while it lasts thy Maker's praise,
His goodness, wisdom, power.

We both our wondrous being owe
To his unfathomed skill ;
His hand supplies our wants alike,
And guards alike from ill.

While I with thee for common gifts
A grateful heart should pour,
I would for richer gifts of grace
In higher strains adore.

1835.

THE WILD ROSE.

A MODEST rose that wildly grew
Within a quiet, narrow dell,
Caught sweetness and a charming hue
From sun and dew that on it fell.

It had not been a fairer rose,
Nor held of sweets a richer dower,
If, in a garden's cultured close,
It had been tended every hour.

On every breeze that shook its crown,
At set of sun or break of morn,
It stilly threw its sweetness down,
To be to other spaces borne.

That sweetness floated far away,
A presence felt by many a sense ;
Came silent, like the beams of day,
But who could tell the source from whence ?

Thus humble lives, obscure, unknown,
May be with worth and virtue crowned ;
And noiseless forces from them thrown,
May carry blessings wide around.

1857-

MY TOOTH.

THIS tooth hath done its work. Wrenched
from its place,
It can not serve me more; yet not too mean
Has it become to wake a useful thought :
It leads my reason back to that Great Cause
By whom all things became. No stroke of
chance
Could e'er have brought it into proper form,
And hardened it for use; no toss of chance
Have set it firm just where my needs required.
In miracles like this let fools believe—
Those fools so wise, so subtle, so acute,
Who in all nature round them, and above,
Have seen no traces of a living mind.
This tooth reveals contrivance; such its form,
And such its place, it must have been designed
To grind my food, and fit it for my use ;
An aim and end beyond material force;
An aim and end which prove intelligence—
Intelligence—another name for God.

Fixed in its niche by that disposing hand
That deals to every one his lot, this tooth
Performed its office well; did every one
Thus keep their proper niche, and do thus well
What to their place belongs, the world would
move
With less of discord, less of jostle, jar.

As good and evil often mingle here,
So has this means of pleasure been as well
A source of pain; of pain that would have
made

A stoic hold his cheek, and pace the room,
And ask the doctor's aid. Though pain itself
Is not a good, yet good may from it spring;
To patience, meekness, it may school our
hearts.

It bids us, too, to regulate our lives
With prudence, care; for oft we suffer pain
Because, for want of thought, or holy will,
We wrong ourselves, and break the laws of
health;

And pain recalls the truth, the awful truth,
That man, and all the world, is under curse.
Sin, sin, has been our ruin; with it came
Pain, sickness, death—an endless train of woes.

Before me lies a token of my doom :
Decay has touched this bone, and soon decay
Will steal o'er all my frame, and bring it down
To those calm chambers where the weary rest.
On all below the skies, decay's still work
Goes irresistless on : there's nothing fixed,
Nor hardened to the tooth of time. What then ?
Shall I stand shivering at my certain doom ?
As down I cast this worthless bone, so I,
Erelong, will give this body back to earth.
Why should the grave alarm me ? Christ has
 passed
Before me there, and triumphed o'er its power.
Though solemn still, it is not dreadful now ;
It is the passage to a better land.
Then let me go ; I shall be seen again,
With powers renewed, and safe from all decay.
1864.

THE TWO COCKS.

Two cocks there were, of famous breed,
Whose beauty none could well exceed.
Though cocks are seldom named, yet these
Their owner christened Trim and Tease.
The former loved the cottage door,
Nor would the grounds beyond explore ;

Content, and free from love of change,
He kept within his chosen range.
The other, too, forbore to roam,
And seldom wandered far from home;
He loved the barn, nor wished for more
Than grains that scattered from its floor.

In autumn when the skies had chilled,
A cup with corn the farmer filled,
To lure the tamer fowl away
To where the other chose to stay;
That while the winter's reign should hold,
He might be sheltered from the cold.
Trim, eager for the scattered grains,
Is tempted from his own domains;
He still is led along with ease,
Until he gets a glimpse of Tease
Fast rushing near, with feathers spread,
And passion reddening in his head.
Unwilling, and unskilled, to fight,
Trim turns at once and takes to flight;
The hotspur of the barn he shuns,
And homeward to the cottage runs;
While one exclaims: "Oh, see him go,
As if his shadow were his foe;
He thinks it best to run away,
That he may fight some other day.

No valiant heart would tamely yield
Before a struggle for the field ;
Or quail before a foeman's eye,
And, challenged, from his presence fly."
" You judge him wrong," a voice replies ;
" The ruling motive deeper lies.
What prudence counsels, may appear
The actings of unmanly fear ;
For prudence would advise to shun
All fruitless troubles, ere begun.
Ground that by strife must be maintained,
Were often better lost than gained.
And then how odd, to poise the right
Upon the chances of a fight ;
To prove the valor of the breast
By bold exposure of the crest !
Those who from brawls and strife retire,
Or who are not provoked to ire,
When others threaten, injure, rave,
Are not the timid, but the brave ;
For every cock can bluster, crow,
And dirt and insults freely throw ;
The few who bear a wrong with grace,
Shine forth the noblest of their race."

THE FOOLISH TRAVELER.

A TRAVELER, who wished to gain
A distant, fair, and happy plain,
Had need to pass, to greet the scene,
A stream profound that rolled between.
But all his care along the road
Was, strangely, on a box bestowed,
Which, laced upon his back, he bore
With painful toil. It held a store
Of golden coin—the garnered fruit
Of earnest thought and long pursuit.
How, safely, he should reach his aim
He had not thought, until he came
Up to the shore; where, looking round,
No bridge, or boat, or plank he found.
Yet lured by yonder charming side,
He thought to struggle through the tide
With all his wealth. His limbs of force
A moment urged him on his course;
Then strength, and hope, and purpose failed;
The stronger floods with ease prevailed
And bore him downward; for, too late,
He found his burden much too great.

MORAL.

How few the needful way provide
To pass secure to Canaan's side !
Men come to Jordan's darkling flood
With all their stores of worldly good ;
There worldly good is turned to loss—
A weight which none can bear across.

1849.

THE DOG AND THE MIRROR.

It happened in that busy time,
When rooms are whitened o'er with lime ;
And when one rule alone seems fixed—
That household goods, confused and mixed,
Must take the air, be brushed or broomed,
Or to a sudsy torture doomed—
That Susan, bustling here and there,
With heated brow and elbows bare,
Removed a mirror to the hall,
And stood it sloping to the wall.
As all the doors were open thrown,
To catch the breezes thither blown,
The dog, who never thought it sin
To steal a morsel, wandered in,
With hope to find some choicer fare
Than common dogs are used to share.

Around from this to that he goes,
To try their nature with his nose ;
Till, chancing near its face to pass,
He sees his image in the glass.
As startled at the sight, he stares,
The figure back upon him glares ;
With him it moves, with him it scowls ;
Shows teeth for teeth, and at him growls ;
How can a dog of spirit brook
That saucy, fierce, defiant look ?
How from an open challenge turn,
While all his passions stir and burn ?
With all his force he forward flies—
The glass in scattered pieces lies.

MORAL.

The tale, I think, presents to view
How folly acts, and wisdom, too.
Unreal wrongs, to folly, wear
A dreadful shape, a threatening air ;
Mistaken acts excite her rage ;
She arms, with shadows to engage.
While fools scan others' faults, the wise
Inspect themselves, with jealous eyes.
When, clearly imaged to their sight,
They see themselves in proper light ;

When all their faults before them pass,
As truth presents them in her glass,
The hateful objects they abhor,
And with themselves begin a war ;
Nor cease, till all that gives offense
Is shattered to the inner sense.

1850.

THE BOYS AND THEIR EGGS.

SOME spend a dime because so small,
Nor deem it, squandered, waste at all ;
The thoughtful and the prudent know
One dime may to a million grow.

When merry Easter came around,
And cooks, by ancient custom bound,
Prepared to pile the festive board
With eggs, for that occasion stored,
A mother in a humble cot,
Who had two sons to cheer her lot,
Gave each an egg—perhaps to find
Each boy's peculiar bent of mind.
One, fond of gifts that he could eat,
From pie and cake to roasted meat,
Soon had his egg before him placed,
Cooked just to suit his cultured taste.

The other—shrewd, discerning youth—
Who could deny a craving tooth,
Resolved to keep his little store,
And be at pains to make it more.
With hope high pulsing in his breast,
He put his portion in a nest;
Where Nature, veiled within the shell,
Wrought mysteries too deep to tell.
Beneath the hen's warm brooding wing
The egg became a living thing;
The living thing soon left its walls,
Soon knew its mother's various calls:
It fed, it grew, and soon became
A hen, with full and vigorous frame.
Her owner's care she well repaid
With numerous eggs; nor long delayed
To hatch a brood; these, each again,
Laid eggs, and led a thriving train.
Thus, faster than the summers flew,
The boy's possessions larger grew;
Until he saw about the door
A flock too large to wish for more:
Then eggs and chickens he could sell,
While every day he feasted well.

THE RATS.

RAT there was—so legends run—
Who, when danger he would shun,
Or abroad would seek supplies,
Always used some neighbor's eyes;
For Dame Nature, though so kind,
By some slip had made him blind.
When, one day, a new-made friend
Aid and guidance asked to lend,
Out he bounded from his nook,
With a pleased and grateful look.
Simple heart! he trusted free
One more favored scarce than he;
One to whose disordered view
All was false in form and hue;
Yet who fancied, in his pride,
That he well could act as guide.
As a dog with neck in ring
Leads a blind man with a string,
So between them passed a straw,
Held by each with vigorous jaw.
On they went in friendly chat,
Telling tales of trap and cat,
Praising now the balmy air,
Now the choicer kinds of fare.
But they found the saying true,

That with good comes evil too.
Oft the guide's fallacious eye
Deemed some distant object nigh ;
Oft some object, deemed afar,
Threw athwart a sudden bar ;
Oft they jostled, stumbled, reeled,
Bruised their limbs, and scratched and peeled.
Blind, thus rudely drawn along,
Thought at length some hitch was wrong.
Just as he, in way of talk,
Therefore wished to end the walk,
On the cellar's sluggish breeze
Came the grateful scent of cheese.
Quick the leader, with a bound,
Wheeled himself and comrade round :
Half consenting, half afraid,
Blind a brief resistance made,
Then pursued the straw that led,
Eager for the feast ahead.
Strips of board, at random cast,
Bridged a vessel deep and vast ;
On a shelf above were stored
Dainties fit for royal board.
Aided less by eye than nose,
Which as pilot often goes,
Soon the friends, with hopeful breast,

Near the luscious stores had pressed,
When the guide—presuming dunce,
Dunce and rascal, both at once—
Boldly led his trusting friend
On a board that dipped its end:
Whirling downward, both were drowned
In a soapy sea profound.

All except the dumb and blind
May with ease the moral find.

1851.

THE QUARREL.

Two neighboring boys, one April day,
Had met to spend an hour in play.
Their mingled gladness echoed round,
With not a discord in the sound.
Each joined with zeal whatever game
The other loved, or chose to name;
Each seemed the other's chosen friend—
How guileless hearts in one can blend!

Thus, lightly-winged, the moments flew,
Each playmate to the other true,
Until, too soon, a hapless word
The hidden pool of passion stirred.
One, half in earnest, half in jest,

Presumed to call his ball the best ;
With piercing voice and flashing eye,
The other sent a quick reply :
“ A dunce,” he said, “ a dunce alone
Would choose your ball before my own ;
In better leather mine is bound,
With nobler leaps it quits the ground.”
Down with the word his ball he hurled,
To force it to the airy world.
Each proved his ball ; each tried his tongue,
And venomed words with vigor flung ;
Hard names without restraint were charged,
And facts were lessened, or enlarged ;
Each in the other now had found
The meanest boy that walked the ground.

Some aimless steps, amid their heat,
Removed the conflict to the street ;
Where, closing round a filthy pool—
No, not their heated brows to cool—
Each o’er the other dashed a shower,
With hand and foot, and all his power.
While thus engaged, an ancient man,
Who knew how first the feud began,
With hasty steps advancing near,
Broke out in protest strong and clear :
“ Dismiss, O boys, dismiss your rage ;

Regard the words of riper age :
There's nothing half so sure as strife—
Too well I know—to spoil a life.
Since passion sees with blood-shot eyes,
The truth to him is in disguise.
You, lately, in each other's view,
Were equal to the best you knew ;
Now anger in your bosoms burns,
Each tongue to sharp approaches turns. *92*
But every one who rails, contends,
Will, likely, get the coin he sends ;
For who the better grows, the while
He calls another knavish, vile ?
Did Willie make his garments clean,
Were fewer spots upon him seen,
While in the muddy street he splashed,
And filthy rain on Walter dashed ?
If passion flings its dirt and smut,
Will others' mouths keep sternly shut ?
When nothing can be answered back,
The pot may call the kettle black."

THE HUNTERS.

A MAN and a boy, with a dog and a gun,
Were out and away in advance of the sun.
The birds had aroused from their sweet little
naps,
With leaves for their curtains and wings for
their caps ;
The squirrels were bounding away from their
doors,
To breathe the fresh morning, or gather their
stores ;
While all the shrewd rascals that pillage at
night
Had skulked to their quarters in dread of the
light.
The birds of quick sense as the hunters drew
near
Shot deep in the thickets with quivering fear ;
The squirrels gave sharply a cry of alarm,
Then sprang to the trees as a shelter from
harm ;
Or mincing their breakfast, erect on a stool,
They seemed unobservant, regardless and cool,
Till, just as the musket was leveled and true,
They sunk with a laugh, and eluded the view.

The sportsmen had threaded the woodlands
around,
Nor more than a pigeon had brought to the
ground ;
Awhile they had wandered in orchard and
field,
To see what the places more open would yield ;
When suddenly came on the wings of the
breeze
The bark of the dog from a cluster of trees.
“Some sport for us yet,” exulted the man,
As both to the maples with eagerness ran.
“I see,” said the younger, whose vision was
dim,
“I see a black squirrel far out on a limb ;
If I had the gun I would make him my prize.”
“I see but a kitten,” the other replies.
“Then your eyes,” says the youth, “are wonderful cheats ;”
(Such manners as his may be learned in the
streets ;)
“A squirrel up yonder is rocked by the gale,
If one ever carried a head or a tail.”
The elder rejoins with a titter suppressed,
“A moment will settle whose eyes are the
best.”

He brings the poor creature at once to their
feet,
While the gun's loud thunder the echoes repeat.
As bleeding and gasping, he holds it to view,
“A squirrel,” he giggles, “a squirrel—in hue.”

It is human to err: for one to be wrong
Is easy and common: then learn from my song
To speak with due caution, lest what you
assert
Should put you to shame, or recoil ^{to} your hurt.
Nor, surely, should younglings assume to
know more
Than those who were learning a long while
before
Our younglings were fondled, or danced on a
knee.
Old fools, it is likely, there always will be,
Yet wisdom we justly expect to be found
With those who have been with their hoary
locks crowned.

1852.

THE FROG AND THE SNAKE.

ONCE on a time, a crafty snake,
By hunger pressed, resolved to make
 A burly frog his prey ;
Though force and will were strong in each,
The frog, by leaps of wonderous reach,
 In safety led the way.

At last the snake, in motion quick,
Surprised the frog by subtle trick,
 And caught him by the feet ;
The frog at first, unnerved by fear,
Wailed sorely, that in mid-career
 He such a doom must meet.

His throbbing brain a little cool,
He called himself a coward, fool,
 Ere he was killed, to die ;
So large a body, whole, alive,
Down such a slender neck to drive—
 He laughed that one should try.

Meanwhile the snake, with will and nerve
That would not from his purpose swerve,
 Had swallowed half his meal ;
His throat dilating by degrees,
He passed his victim down with ease
 To where he ceased to feel.

MORAL.

Some serpents, in a human guise,
Lure simple souls, by craft or lies,
To ruin, shame, and death ;
These suffer thus the very fate
They never feared, and learn too late
To hate the tempter's breath. 1853.

THE RIDE.

A STEER was at rest in the shade,
Content, and of nothing afraid.
When Frank, on a ramble, espied him,
He muttered, " How pleasant to ride him ! "
So, moving with scarcely a sound,
He vaulted astride at a bound.
Up sprang the scared beast, and the jolt
Nigh shot the boy off, like a bolt.
Again in his balance corrected,
A jolly back-ride he expected ;
But the beast, when twice he had wheeled,
Shot forth to a wide, open field ;
And faster and higher he bounded,
Till afar his footfalls resounded.
Then thought the poor rider, " How well
Were I at my home in the dell ! "
But ah, without stirrup or rein,

Or a chance to lay hold of a mane ;
Unable his courser to guide,
Or to keep his position and ride,
He was tumbled erelong in the dirt,
And equally frightened and hurt.

As I looked, to myself I repeated—
It may not be hard to get seated ;
But if awkward, or new in the place,
Though we start on a prosperous race,
We may get in the end a sad tumble,
Just to make us a little more humble.

If one for mere pleasure or fun,
His head into danger will run,
He is simply—my judgment is cool—
By choice, or by nature, a fool.

1853.

THE TOWN CLOCK.

A clock that from a tower looked down
On all the houses in the town,
Was so exact in every stroke,
That every tongue its praises spoke.
Since it had been correct so long,
None seemed to think it could go wrong.

But as the seasons went around,
It was at length in error found.
The cause to which the change was due
The wisest townsman never knew.
Perhaps some part had slightly swerved
From due position, unobserved ;
Or some sly rogue had climbed on high,
And touched the works to make them lie.
But though the cause in secret lurked,
The sure result no less was worked ;
The fact, the stubborn fact remained,
That on old Time the clock had gained.
Yet, as it bid, the town arose,
Or sat to dine, or sought repose.
The people still, with trustful air,
Their clocks with that would oft compare,
And when they found them losing ground,
Would turn the pointers duly round.
Thus careful to observe the time
As measured in the tower sublime,
All were at last surprised to find
Their clocks had left the sun behind.

MORAL.

Those who above the people stand,
The great, the gifted of the land,
May well our guides and patterns be,

If virtuous to a just degree :
But when to follies they descend,
Or vices with their goodness blend,
While still the very same they seem—
As good, as worthy of esteem—
The evil downward spreads around,
A force that works without a sound.
For safety, then, avert the eye
From forms of men, however high ;
With caution tread, let age and youth
Prefer as guide the Book of Truth.

1856.

THE INJURED FRIEND.

OUTSTRETCHED beside a farmer's gate,
Where bright the morning shone,
Old Carlo lay, with look sedate,
And feasting on a bone.

A strolling friend, as thus he gnawed,
A friend he long had known,
At once resolved, by force or fraud
To make that bone his own.

When Carlo growled and showed his teeth,
His friend, with sudden bound,
Flew on him, and, while prone beneath,
Gnashed in his side a wound.

The wound was slight ; one transient week
Had healed it o'er so well,
That one who might the injury seek,
Its place could scarcely tell.

Yet Carlo, when his friends he meets,
The false as well as true,
The story of his wrong repeats,
And brings his wound to view.

One friend at last, of open mind,
No longer can forbear ;
“ Indeed,” he says, “ it was not kind
Your guiltless flesh to tear.

“ Still, not a dog that looks you o'er
Would see the scratch you wear,
Did not yourself point out the sore,
And part the covering hair.”

MORAL.

The silly tales which tattlers tell,
To hurt our precious name,
We often to importance swell,
And give a needless fame.

Would we with sturdy silence treat
The tales which gossips frame,
Their tales would soon themselves defeat,
And none but gossips shame.

1857.

THE WALK; OR, GOODMAN AND HIS SON.

SEE Goodman strolling o'er his land,
And kindly holding Edgar's hand
To help him on his way;
He reads the Book of Nature well,
Nor to his son forbears to tell
The lessons of the day.

When, as he talks, his muscles ease
Their clasp, the boy his fingers frees,
And slowly falls behind;
So oft do parents slacken hand,
And o'er their children lose command,
And late their error find.

The boy has but a boyish head,
And hence a fancy takes to tread
Just where his father leads;
With roguish smile behind his back,
A foot put down in every track,
He step by step proceeds.

Soon Goodman hears a splashing noise,
And knowing well the ways of boys,
A glance behind him throws;
“Look where you step,” he gives command,
And censures, as he waves his hand,
The boy’s bespattered clothes.

Such words from Edgar shrewdly break
As shut his mouth, and neatly take
The sternness from his frown:
“Your censure seems a little odd,
For only where you first have trod
My feet I venture down.”

MORAL.

Discern the cause, that oft reproofs,
Like shots that fall on plated roofs,
Act with rebounding force;
The very men who warn or blame,
Or try the erring to reclaim,
Are on as wrong a course.

Let parents, then, from evil turn;
On every line of conduct learn
To move exactly right;
Let children with such parents blest,
Adopt the ways their feet have pressed,
And in their steps delight.

THE SNAKE'S EGGS.

As Richard drove the plow along,
And sang to cheer his toil,
He turned some curious eggs to sight
From underneath the soil.

He paused awhile to find their sum,
To mark their form and hue,
Then grasped again the sturdy plow,
And raised his song anew.

Had he but stayed, and taken care
Those little eggs to break,
He might with every blow he aimed
Have killed a hideous snake.

How oft, alas, our heedless minds
Neglect the favoring hour,
When evil might with ease be slain,
Ere grown to dangerous power.

1860.

THE QUARRELSOME COCKS. [A TRUE STORY.]

Two cocks whose lot was cast
Amid the same domain,
Might all their days in peace have passed,
And found that peace was gain.

But in their little frames
Was such a love of strife,
That each opposed the other's claims,
And vexed his daily life.

If one his trumpet blew,
And sent abroad his cheer,
Back on the air the other threw
A challenge loud and clear.

They often met and bled
In battles fiercely fought ;
But neither, but with aching head,
A triumph ever bought.

Thus went the months around,
Till, one autumnal morn,
One cock beneath his perch was found,
Disfigured, stiff, and torn.

But when the other saw
His foe in coldness lie,
He shrank not back in reverent awe,
Nor did his hatred die.

At once with bill and spur
He rushed upon the corse,
And vexed because it would not stir,
Wreaked on it all his force.

If passion, malice, spite,
Must strike each living head
That fails to speak or move aright,
Oh, let them spare the dead.

When death inflicts his stroke,
What mortal man but needs
That charity would throw her cloak
O'er thousands of his deeds? 1860.

THE CROW'S SOLILOQUY.

A CROW, one day, was kindly told—
A blackbird did the favor—
That men have charged him from of old
With wholly bad behavior.

The tattler thus inflamed the crow
More than he had intended;
“If I,” said he, “am slandered so,
My case shall be defended.”

While every nerve within his frame
With hot resentment quivered,
In words that none could justly blame,
His protest he delivered.

“What precious gifts are ears and eyes,
If people rightly use them !
But if through them they gather lies,
How much the loss to lose them ?

“Those haughty lords of all the earth—
How they mistake and blunder !
If birds like me lay claim to worth,
Their eyes expand in wonder !

“They deem that in creation vast
No bird is more a sinner ;
I steal their corn to break my fast,
And kill their chicks for dinner.*

“They sneer because I dress in black,
And caw as nature taught me ;
But needed sense I can not lack,
For chaff has never caught me.

“And since the world, while here I fare,
A living must afford me,
I look about, and gather where
My labors best reward me.

*Crows as well as hawks sometimes catch chickens, as I know by observation.

“Nor is my life, as some suppose,
All wrong—one wicked tissue—
For oft, the wise observer knows,
My deeds in blessings issue.

“Oft when the plowshare rudely throws
The worms out from their burrows,
I glean them, if no fool oppose,
Along the newest furrows.

“In forests, pastures, cultured fields,
How much I check the vermin,
How much protect the annual yields,
Let wiser heads determine.

“Where rank corruption taints the air,
And threatens with diseases,
I do my work; then all is fair,
And sweetness loads the breezes.”

If, then, mankind are just and wise,
How can the simple know it,
Unless, as meet occasions rise,
Their acts and judgments show it?

Those least esteemed, when understood,
Or when we closer view them,
May show, in heart or life, some good
For which respect is due them.

THE CHICKENS.

A HEN and her brood,
While searching for food,
Were gay as the morning was fair ;
Though low on the ground
Their joys could abound,
As well as if winged for the air.

While, fearless and bold,
They roamed uncontrolled,
A foe was far on in his flight ;
Aloft in the blue
His circles he drew,
And glanced his broad wings in the light.

The motherly hen,
Whose vigilant ken
Watched widely the earth and the sky,
Descried at a glance
His rapid advance,
And uttered an agonized cry.

Each chicken, inclined
Its mother to mind,
Is startled, and instantly heeds ;
Some haste to her wings—
The wisest of things—
And some to a covert of weeds.

But one, for a bug,
Or else for a tug
At a worm, presumes to delay ;
The hawk from the air
Sweeps suddenly there,
And carries it screaming away.

MORAL.

Those children are wise,
And known in the skies,
Who promptly their parents obey ;
But troubles and woes
Are certain to those
Who spurn what their parents may say.
1858.

ROBIN IN HIS FATHER'S BOOTS.

WHEN Jones drew off his boots at night,
And stood them near his bed,
That there the dawn would find them still
Seemed settled in his head.

But Robin rose before the sun ;
Before his father, too ;
And what an older head had planned,
Soon ventured to undo.

Drawn in his gambols near the boots,
His slender legs he ran
Down in their depths, and took at once
The stature of a man.

Around the room, with clattering tread,
The leathern weights he bore ;
Nor failed at times to reel and trip,
And tumble to the floor.

When Jones had risen from his bed,
And sought his boots in vain,
The words he used to chide his son
Were very strong and plain.

The mother, then, (as mothers oft
With wise discernment may,)
Smoothed o'er the father's frowning brow,
And brushed a storm away.

“If all the world,” she mildly said,
“Were old and wise as we,
No noise of children would be heard,
No babies would there be.

“If children with their watchful eyes
See fathers walk in boots,
They too in boots will try to walk,
And take to like pursuits.

OLD JOWLER.

- “A worthy man, dear Jones, are you ;
And could I see our boy
Put down his feet where yours have trod,
My heart would fill with joy.
- “It should be yours to make a path
So clearly right and true,
That no reproach could come to him,
Should he the same pursue.
- “Thus, when your course shall be complete,
And bear in him its fruits,
A worthy son he will be found,
And wear his father's boots. 1862.

OLD JOWLER.

OLD JOWLER grew to such repute
As seldoms fastens on a brute ;
To young and old the country round,
His name became a hated sound.
Some said he oft at night would roam,
And lure their faithful dogs from home ;
Some said he used to chase their sheep
From field to field, from vale to steep ;
Some, that when children passed the gate
Where he was sure to lie in wait,
He never failed to give a fright,

And often dared to snap and bite.
So from their hatred, as from seeds,
There sprang enough of answering deeds.
When out he sprang in ruffled mood,
And passing foot or wheel pursued,
One swung his threatening cane in air,
Another yelled and tried to scare ;
One would a stone against him dash,
Another strike with stinging lash.
More meek than men he must have been,
Or senseless as a stone within,
Had not such treatment soured him more,
And made more savage than before.

Some chance among the people brought
A youth who had been wisely taught.
Old Jowler's name erelong he knew,
With all the charges, false or true,
Which light or evil tongues had framed,
And wide around the place proclaimed.
One morning, walking on the road
Past where the dog his service owed,
His bosom, as his steps drew near,
Now throbbed with hope and now with fear ;
Hope, that he might escape his glance,
Or, seen, might undisturbed advance ;
Fear, lest, should such a brute assail,

All arts to win his grace might fail.
As thus his feelings rose and fell,
Like waters in their varying swell,
A roar terrific stayed his pace,
And Jowler leaped before his face.
Like to a statue, stiff and dumb,
He stood to see what next would come ;
Yet, but a moment in suspense
What means to try for his defense,
He hurried forth a piece of bread,
That morning as a luncheon spread,
And cast it down, with soothing speech,
Within the furious creature's reach.
The dog, surprised at ways so strange,
Seemed puzzled how to meet the change ;
He leaped aside, advanced, retired,
As if by varying whims inspired ;
He growled, he grinned, he tried the food
With cautious nose, and found it good ;
Then as he seized the grateful fare,
He took at once a milder air ;
He dropped his tail and smoothed his coat,
And hushed the threatenings of his throat.
When these good signs the youth perceived
He deemed the conquest half achieved,
And putting forth a friendly hand,

He forward moved with phrases bland.
The dog at first retained his place,
And closely eyed the stranger's face ;
Then slowly met his kind advance,
With wonder at so odd a chance ;
Then on his head received his palm,
With all his feelings in a calm.
The two awhile in converse stood,
To gain acquaintance as they could ;
The one had pleasant words to say,
The other answered in his way ;
Each thus upon the other wrought,
And made a friend where least he thought.
The boy thereafter, when inclined,
Could near the place with tranquil mind.
If ever, as he moved along,
The dog by chance decided wrong,
And forward dashed in angry mode,
As when a stranger passed the road,
A nearer view, a gentle word,
Or aught that his remembrance stirred,
Would quickly o'er his rage prevail,
And make him fawn and wag his tail.

Thus those reputed false and mean,
Are often found, when nearer seen,
Or when their lives are better known,

Not worthy of reproach alone.
Some friendly words, some kindly ways,
May touch their hearts like sunny rays,
May tend some goodly traits to show,
And cause their grateful tears to flow.

1862.

GETTING IN AND GETTING OUT.

As ONCE a mouse with peering eye,
In hope some dainty fare to spy,
Was skulking round a pantry floor,
He saw a thing unseen before.
The curious form he paused to scan,
But could not comprehend its plan;
Its nature, use, he tried to smell,
But what it was he could not tell.
It seemed a something wrought with skill,
Some hidden purpose to fulfill ;
Its sides a rising tier of rings,
To pillars bound with iron strings.
Not willing to remain in doubt,
While dainties might be near his snout,
With mingled wonder, hope, and fear,
He crept along till very near ;
When lo ! a look between the wires
Aroused his stomach's keen desires :

But all his arts and shifts were vain
The tempting morsel to obtain,
Until the fabric's top he dared,
And found an entrance there prepared.
Too soon he smiled at his success,
Presumed too soon his stars to bless ;
For ah, he wiped his mouth, to learn
The way would not permit return.
His only thought or care had been
To gain an easy entrance in ;
While cautious wisdom would, no doubt,
Have weighed the chance of getting out.

Can even nodding dullness fail
To see the truth that points the tale ?

1865.

THE PERSIAN YOUTH.

THERE lived a youth, upon a time,
In Persia's soft and happy clime,
Who made religion first, supreme,
In thought, in word, in every scheme.

His creed was short ; but greater length
Might have subtracted from its strength :
“ One God there is, whose sovereign will,
Fix what it may, is righteous still.

One God there is, and in his name,
With prophet-tongue, Mohammed came."
Unlike the men who swallow creeds
Just as the language plainly reads,
Then slyly slip between the lines
A sense to suit their own designs,
He bent his will to make his creed
A living thing, in thought and deed.
He never dreamed the fatal dream—
Enough to seem as others seem;
Enough, though neither spirit warms,
Nor heart, to practice outward forms.
Those who professed and practiced well
He would not equal, but excel;
Resolved, by Allah's aid, to shine
A pattern of the life divine.

Each day, with holy pages spread,
He read for hours, and searched and read;
For hours on bended knees, or prone,
Communed with Allah on his throne;
Nor at the slumberous eventide
Laid he his pious works aside.
When night might help his soul to rise
To holier places in the skies,
Oft from his couch he stole away
To meditate alone, and pray.

As thus, one night, beneath the stars
He sought relief from all that mars
The better feelings, on him broke
A sudden voice, and thus it spoke :
“Where now, my son, thy native sense,
That thou shouldst give such grave offense
To nature’s kind, benignant laws?
Those who at night refuse to pause
To rest their weary hands and brains,
Must take the penalty—the pains.”
The youth replied : “It must be well,
Against these hearts which so rebel,
To bring our utmost strength to bear,
And give them even nightly care.
While I these silent hours resign
To works that may my soul refine
And fit it, as an essence pure,
For him who can no stain endure,
Thy other sons, enslaved to sense,
Or, righteous only in pretense,
Devote the night’s protracted hours
To sleep, and man’s inferior powers.”
The sire rejoined : “How apt is pride
Its follies from itself to hide !
Nor does self-righteousness discern
How much, of self, it has to learn.

Our hearts, and not our mental views,
Give to our deeds their moral hues;
And better far it were to sleep
Than watch o'er others' lives to keep.
To pray, and feed devotion's fire,
Though nightly thou shouldst here retire,
While such a spirit reigns within,
Harsh only to another's sin,
Thy works would be a vain parade,
Like worthless chaff, if justly weighed."

Some, like that youth of Persian birth,
We still may meet. More real worth,
More wisdom, in themselves abound,
They judging, than is elsewhere found.
Their deeds conform to every rule
Which Christ has given in his school;
Their zeal is always in a blaze,
And blesses like the summer rays.
Their sins they claim are very small—
Indeed, they seldom sin at all;
In them, so perfect are their lives,
There's nothing but religion thrives.
But look them through: their lofty claim
Is less their honor than their shame.
Conceited, proud, their self-esteem
Is in their eyes a blinding beam.

They freely deal their censures round,
Nor heed how many hearts they wound.
You show, perhaps, a milder zeal,
Or humbly hide how much you feel ;
You hold, perhaps, a different creed
On points where none are quite agreed ;
To gain some end all seek alike,
You on some other method strike :
These righteous censors, therefore, judge
Your sleeping conscience needs a nudge ;
Your judgment, like a leaning post,
Needs righting by the skill they boast.
Not mildly, though, do they begin
To check your error, or your sin ;
They promptly start with sneer or frown
To wilt your independence down ;
With heated words they next assail,
And, poor at reasoning, choose to rail.
This suits them greatly, for, the worse,
The more astray, the more perverse
They make you seem, by contrast clear
The better they themselves appear ;
The darker your religion grows,
Theirs, by so much, the brighter shows ;
For every fault they find in you,
In them a virtue comes to view.

But who are these who dare assume,
As judges, to acquit or doom?
When shall resound the judgment call,
Each for himself must stand or fall.
What others are, or how have wrought,
Is little profit to our thought.
Each in himself enough, and more,
Can find to ponder and deplore,
And think—the soul's deep places lie
All open to the Flaming Eye.
Had we an equal inner view,
As broad, as deep, as clear, as true,
What self-abhorrence would we feel!
How gently with offenders deal!
Not till we learn ourselves to dread,
As wrong in heart and wrong in head,
Will we to Christ the Helper flee:
In him alone the soul is free;
When he the needed grace supplies,
We to our nobler manhood rise.

1856.

Rewritten 1880.

THE BABE OF BETHLEHEM.

I.

LIGHT on the hills of Bethlehem !

The wakeful shepherds turn and gaze,
When, lo ! —a vision strange to them—
An angel glows amid the blaze.

“Fear not,” he says ; “I herald down
Glad news—a joy to earth’s extreme ;
This day is born, in David’s town,
A Savior, Christ, the Lord supreme.”

At once a host, enrobed in light,
With gladsome song the ether fill :
“Glory to God in the highest height,
And peace on earth, to men good will.”

Thus rolls along the glowing sky
A sweeter song than e’er was heard ;
And when afar its echoes die,
The shepherds still are deeply stirred.

To Bethlehem they haste away,
With buoyant hope in every pace ;
By signs revealed to guide their way,
The infant to his couch they trace.

Oh, day to be remembered long !
How favored they of all our race !
The first to hear the angels' song,
The first to see the Savior's face !

With hallelujahs they return,
And spread the joyful tidings round ;
So every soul with zeal should burn,
Who has the great Messiah found.

II.

The Magi see a restless star,
A new and bright celestial gem ;
It leads them to the westward far,
And stays its course at Bethlehem.

It stands above the infant's head,
Whose birth has startled king and priest ;
But why excite alarm or dread,
Since born among the poor and least ?

Though coming thus, the sages deem
That something royal in him hides ;
No stars for common mortals beam,
Nor to their presence act as guides.

On him, as on a sceptered king,
Their choicest treasures they confer ;
So thousands more to him shall bring
Their gold, their frankincense and myrrh.

For he, the Babe of Bethlehem—
So humbly and obscurely born—
Is destined to a diadem
More bright than brow has ever worn.

Firm on his father David's throne
His greater Son shall grandly sit ;
His bitterest foes his right shall own,
And freely to his will submit.

His glorious kingdom shall increase,
Till o'er the earth it shall prevail
With gifts of righteousness and peace—
A kingdom that shall never fail.

III.

Since hung the star o'er Bethlehem,
Though ages in the past have set,
The Branch that rose on Jesse's stem
Is strong among the nations yet.

There's not another name that holds
In human thought so wide a place ;
No other doctrine moves and molds,
So much as his the human race.

Some see a glory round his head
No earthly power can ever dim ;
Whatever charms the world may spread,
They spurn them all for hope in him ;

While others scorn him, and disdain
His truth, his help, his sheltering wings ;
This world to them is greater gain
Than all the good his service brings.

But not to judge or to condemn,
The Son of man has come ; for when
The angels sang at Bethlehem,
They sang of *peace, good will to men.*

His love, by all the toils it bore,
By all the precious blood it gave,
Would every wandering soul restore,
Would every helpless sinner save.

O peerless Prince of Bethlehem,
Thou Sovereign of the human soul !
Might I but touch thy garment's hem,
And feel that I am cleansed and whole !

I know thy boundless grace is free,
And can its utmost wish perform ;
Oh, might it do its work in me,
And all my being shape and warm !

Then friends may say, when I abide
No longer on the earth with them—
“For him he lived, in him he died,
Whose birth was sung at Bethlehem.”

1881.

Rewritten 1887.

MY HAPPIEST DAYS.

[These lines are founded on a passage in Dr. Gardiner Spring's excellent book, "Obligations of the World to the Bible."]

THE happiest days I ever knew
Were not the days of social mirth,
When cherished friends, a chosen few,
Made bright my little spot of earth ;
Were not the days when mind and sense
Found each its own peculiar good,
And, by the smiles of Providence,
Amid abundant stores I stood.

My happiest days were not the days
When all my limbs with health were strong,
And I could tread life's busy ways
With heart that beat a cheerful song ;

Were not the days when, free from care,
In field and wood I musing strayed,
And held devout communings there
With Him who all these wonders made.

My happiest days had been to some,
Perchance, the days for sighs and tears,
Since not to me that good had come
Which they pursue through all their years;
Since health had gone, and pains too great
For human strength to bear alone,
'Had brought me near the dismal gate
That opens on a realm unknown.

Yet not to me had e'er been given
Such restful days of calm and peace :
O'er Time's rough sea so nearly driven,
I heard its storms behind me cease.
This world and all its treasures seen
In gleams of light from yonder shore,
I could have turned with soul serene
From all that had allured before.

No clouds, or mists of doubt, to dim
My dear Redeemer to my view ;
I found unfailing strength in him,
And proved his sweetest sayings true.

I felt his love upon me glow,
And seemed to see the golden door
About to turn, that I might go
To be with him forevermore.

1880.

THE SOUL SATISFIED IN CHRIST.

THEY say there is food for the soul,
Rich food, in this valley below ;
That here we may dip with our bowl
From streams that with sweetness o'er-
flow.

In truth, there are gifts from above
Strown thickly along by our way ;
We know we are ruled by a love
That does not forget us a day.

In truth, there are pleasures that fill
Each sense to our being assigned ;
And nobler than these, if we will,
We reach in the realms of the mind.

Yet still there are wants unsupplied,
Yet still there are aches in the breast ;
And I cry, as others have cried,
“ Oh, where shall I wander for rest ? ”

I search the wide world, all aflame,
For whatever good it contains;
I drink, but my thirst is the same;
I eat, but my hunger remains.

Nay, all is but ashes and gall;
I turn from such portions as these
More wretched than ever, and call—
“Oh, what can my cravings appease?”

In valleys so fruitful and fair,
Beneath so benignant a sky,
Oh, must I lie down in despair?
Of hunger and thirst must I die?

I need not—One speaking I hear,
And tenderness throbs in each word;
“Look upward, O sinner, with cheer,
The wail of thy spirit is heard.

“Thy sorrows I know; for I bore
Far, far greater sorrows for thee;
If therefore thy sins thou deplore,
Come freely, come hoping, to me.

“The water, the bread, which I give,
Thy poor, fainting soul can sustain;
Who tastes them forever shall live,
Nor suffer his cravings again.”

I hear, O Redeemer, thy voice,
 And all that is in me responds ;
 I give thee my trust, and rejoice
 If I may but serve in thy bonds.

The wants which were long my distress,
 Find fitness and fullness in thee ;
 And nearer thy side I would press,
 As more of thy merit I see.

No longer as waters whose breast
 With tempests is ceaselessly tossed ;
 That peace is secured as a guest,
 Which guilt to my spirit had lost.

But still with the carnal at strife,
 Thy succor I still would implore ;
 Oh, give me that water of life,
 Oh, give me that bread, evermore !

1881.

"I SEE THE POINT."

[Founded on fact.]

Two worthy farmers once fell out,
 I never knew just what about ;
 Although, in every neighbor's view,
 The cause was small for such ado.
 One's sheep, perhaps, had leaped their
 bounds,

And trespassed on the other's grounds ;
Or one had seen the other's colt
Across his patch of melons bolt ;
Or one had taken eggs he found
Beside a stump with ivy crowned ;
While yet the other's right seemed clear,
Because his hens had cackled near.
Perhaps some breach of wholesome laws
Had been the quarrel's graver cause ;
One may have failed, on some pretense,
To build his due division fence ;
Or one, with sly and stealthy hand,
Had turned a brooklet on his land,
Which else to nature's course had kept,
And through his neighbor's meadow crept,
Marked where it had been wont to pass
With tortuous streaks of greener grass.

A word, whatever raised the feud,
Might soon have brought a calmer mood ;
But neither, as it seemed too weak,
That kind and generous word would speak.
Their hatred therefore gathered strength
With every day ; until, at length,
Their better friends would try no more
Their old relations to restore.
Still, each the other blamed aloud,

And told his faults in every crowd ;
 Still, each to slander turned his tongue,
 And passion's vulgar missiles flung ;
 As if the cleaner one appears
 The more his neighbor he besmears.
 When Jones, in passion's hazy light,
 Saw, as he thought, where lay the right—
 Though soon he might have found, when
 cooled,
 That he had been deceived, befooled—
 Old Quibble's office straight he sought,
 And all his wrongs before him brought,
 With vows, if justice could be won
 On earth, it should be surely done.
 "Your cause is good," the lawyer cried,
 "I dare at once for you decide."

To Wiggins quickly flew the news ;
 And thus arraigned, he could but choose
 To stand defense. He thought, besides,
 Since law for just awards provides,
 That when the facts were searched and bared,
 For him must judgment be declared ;
 While Jones should find, that in her school
 Dame Justice scourges every fool.
 With hopes like these, he spread his case
 Before a lawyer's gracious face.

"It grieves me, sir," the man replied,
"That I must take the other side.
Had Jones not been before you here,
I would, of course, for you appear.
Yet let me say, I have a friend
Whom I am free to recommend ;
In practice skilled, in law profound
As any man that walks the ground.
A note from me will guide you right,
And place this chance in proper light."
As Wiggins rose and left the place
His thanks were radiant in his face.
When from the office well away
He wondered what the note might say,
And chose to know ; for Quibble's haste
The paper in his hand had placed
Without a seal. Perhaps he thought
That Wiggins, whom no schools had taught,
Could read no written lines at all ;
Not such, at least, as lawyers scrawl.
"I seize my chance," the farmer said,
And, as he spoke, he stood and read :
"These geese are fat and heavy, brother ;
If you pick one, I will the other."
"I see the point," the man exclaimed,
With waving fist and face inflamed ;

“The gain, it seems, in this affair,
Will be to those who make us bare.
Fat geese, forsooth! In vain the net
In sight of even geese is set.
Since Quibble and his worthy friend
Would each his side with warmth defend,
With less regard to right and law
Than to the fees they hope to draw,
Their sordid wishes I will foil;
And with my neighbor end the broil.”

If men heed not the lesson taught,
Their wisdom may be dearly bought.

1877.

FARMER JENKINS.

OLD Jenkins, who lived on the crown of the hills
That skirted the meadow at Wappenger's mills,
Though ever astir like the waves of the deep,
Not half the reward of his labors could reap.

Though ever astir, with so careless a hand
He mended his fences and furrowed his land,
That roughly he finished whate'er he began,
And needs had been looser, though wiser to
plan.

Old Bill, his white horse, was so fond of good
fare,

That when the broad pasture grew scanty and
bare,

He oft would escape from his limits, to find
A garden or meadow or field to his mind.

Our farmer, one summer, had planted his maize
Next where the sly brute was accustomed to
graze ;

While therefore the skies might their blessings
bestow,

He feared there might mischief arise from
below.

So hammer in hand, like a man of good sense,
He thought he would add to the strength of the
fence ;

But all in a bustle, and sparing of nails,
Such work was the issue as evermore fails.

When night had arrived, and the horse had
come near,

With rustling of corn-leaves to tickle his ear,
He knowingly crowded the fence with his
breast,

And the fence gave way—you can fancy the
rest.

Awake and abroad at the blush of the morn,
Old Jenkins went down to examine his corn;
At sight of the ruin that covered the ground,
He raged as a torrent escaped from its bound.

The direst of curses he hurled at the horse,
And Providence blamed for the crooks in its
 course,
Though had he let reason a moment prevail,
He might have seen clearly 'twas all for a nail.

Thus often, when most we complain of the skies,
'Tis all from ourselves that our troubles arise;
Our schemes are annulled, and misfortunes
 assail,
For want of precaution, or just for a nail.

1866.

MOTHER GRUMBLE.

OLD Mother Grumble had enough
 To make her heart content;
Yet thought the world was cold and mean,
 And quite too little lent.

Her snow-white house, with porch and hall,
 Appeared to others' eyes,
For all her wants, for comfort, too,
 Of more than needful size.

Yet often, in her pettish moods,
She wished it larger still,
And that its front, which faced the east,
Had faced the northward hill.

If trees misplaced beside her door
Could turn her feelings sour,
All living things that walked or crawled
Had more disturbing power.

The last poor fowl her whims had spared,
She doomed to lose his head ;
Because he crowed for guests to come,
Just when she had no bread.

Her closest friends, she oft would say,
Were cold as ice should be ;
And as for neighbors, never soul
Had neighbors such as she.

One liked to borrow, not to pay ;
One talked absurdly loud ;
Another, though her clothes were poor,
Was yet extremely proud.

If for a day no neighbor called,
Her deep resentment burned ;
And when they came they stayed too long—
She wished their backs were turned.

If once the shadows and her clock
At variance chanced to run,
Her clock, of course, could not have erred—
The fault was in the sun.

When stormy winter chilled the air,
She wished for warmer days;
When summer came she longed for snow,
To cool the fervid rays.

But let me tell how once the dame
Set out to reach the town;
For she had heard the night before
That goods were sliding down.

The morning songsters, as she passed,
Poured each his sweetest strain;
But not a strain could please her ear—
The noise confused her brain.

Thick hung the dewdrops on the grass,
And soiled her Sunday gown:
“I knew there would be dew,” she said,
“When I must trudge to town.”

Though pleased to gain the busy street,
And meet the moving throng,
She frowned, that even those in silks
Too rudely brushed along.

She found supplies for all her wants,
Saw much to charm her eye;
Yet could not well conceal her rage,
That prices ran so high.

“A curse upon the selfish souls
Who shape the times,” she cried;

“It seems that all the honest men
Have left the place, or died.

“Who now, when he displays his goods,
And hides their faults with lies,
Shows any shame upon his cheeks,
Or guilt about his eyes?

“A pound of tea, in olden times,
Was sixteen ounces, good;
It now is less, and kicks the beam
Much sooner than it should.

“To scant the goods as prices swell,
Is like to rule in trade ;
For even eggs are smaller now
Than once the pullets laid.”

Such were old Mother Grumble's ways ;
Herself her greatest foe,
She vexed her soul with borrowed ills
Through all her course below.

Though she is dead, her children live,
And still her likeness bear ;
Go where we will to find a home,
We meet the Grumbles there.

Disposed to sigh when others laugh,
On selfish ends intent,
They count as evil much that man,
Nor nature, can prevent.

How much of real want and woe
Is to their errors due ;
How high their real blessings rise
They cover from their view.

Were but the fruits of sin destroyed—
Were men from folly free,
This world would be as good a world
As mortals need to see.

OUR BOBBY; OR, YOUNG AMERICA.

Our Bobby is our hope and pride ;
A shrewd and earnest soul is he ;
To him, indeed, has been denied
No talent that of use could be.

But few brief years he yet has seen,
Though one who should his temper try,
Or judge him by his port and mien,
Might well the truth of this deny.

For sovereign nature, at his birth,
Somehow reversed her ancient plan,
And gave him to our teeming earth
But little less mature than man.

While yet a nursling on the knee,
He rudely tore his mother's hair,
That all his staring friends might see
What force a little frame could bear.

And soon his artful nature learned
To try, with tears, to win his way ;
The question therefore oft returned,
Whose will should rule, and whose obey.

Denied or crossed, with stamp and roar
He made his protest and appeals,
Or fell at length upon the floor,
And beat it bravely with his heels.

Thus as the seasons came and went,
His genius opened more and more,
And all his nature took the bent
To which it was inclined before.

And now, what needs he yet to know?
His mind has reached so far a stage
That we seem plodding, dull, and slow,
And all our counsels weak with age.

In books already deep enough,
All sober books to him are dull;
We hence forbear, nor try to stuff
More learning in so full a skull.

When some good neighbor calls around,
And sits awhile in friendly way,
The boy, to show his head is sound,
Leaves not his father much to say.

If grandma at the doorway stops,
He sets for her a common chair,
Then in the cushioned rocker drops,
And see-saws with contented air.

At table seated with the rest,
His eye decides at once his wish,
And scarcely has the food been blessed
Before his fork is in the dish.

Such manners from the street were brought—
A school where he has studied well;
More than his parents yet have thought,
And more than he would dare to tell.

With not a change upon his cheeks—
And who is near he little cares—
The vulgar jest he boldly speaks,
And roundly as a pirate swears.

Where groups collect, or passers glide,
No louder voice than his you hear;
He roughly elbows age aside,
And wards reproof with laugh and leer.

When night has dropped her curtain down,
He loves, more than the home retreat,
The rooms and corners round the town
Where all the coarse and vicious meet.

Tobacco! Oh, without the weed
What boy could perfect manhood show?
When first our Bobby felt the need
I fear his mother does not know.

His mother is a woman, sir,
Creation's oddest, weakest thing;
Why trust a secret then to her,
Or dangle at her apron-string?

Tobacco! Why against it speak,
And give it all its just abuse?
He still with that will swell his cheek,
And flirt around its murky juice.

Or else from his cigars will shed
A stifling smoke where'er he goes;
And till he ends the day in bed,
Will bear the odor in his clothes.

We turn to sports; for greater charms
For him have ball and gun and net,
Than honest trades that nerve the arms,
Or fields where hardly yeomen sweat.

But more than all he loves a horse;
He stirs his mettle as he drives,
And lays his speed along the course,
As if the beast had many lives.

Rein out your team with rapid hand,
All risk to wheel or life to shun;
For no two horses, understand,
Can hold the track against his one.

Look not for him to turn or bend;
He goes the way his face is set;
And ere he well has reached his end,
He starts for something further yet.

As restless as the pulsing deep,
It ever seems his waking care,
May he but some advantage reap,
Where next to push, or what to dare.

Nor need we wonder, should the son
Soon slip into his father's boots;
That he about the house may run,
And regulate the home pursuits.

Our Bob is such; and on each hand
How many like to him appear!
A race—the wonder of our land—
Who have o'erleaped their time and sphere.

If, while our nation still is young,
Our boys so much surpass the men,
When round a few more years have swung,
Oh, what, good friends, shall boys be then?

1871.

WITHERED HOPES.

[A TRUE STORY.]

I.

THE skies are soft, the air is sweet,
The hills and woods are green ;
For spring has come with fairy feet,
And spread a beauteous scene.

The birds salute the happy hour,
And with their mates rejoice ;
It seems a time in field and bower,
For love to find a voice.

Yon blooming maid who treads the mead,
And trusts to Edwin's arm,
Permits the hour for him to plead,
And all her breast to charm.

Such words as thrill a maiden's ear
He oft before has said ;
As oft a haze of doubt and fear
Her arts have round him spread.

But time may work the mystic spell,
And give to doubt a clue ;
The cheeks the changing thought may tell,
And blush the truth to view.

Beneath a maple's leafy boughs
As now the lovers stand,
The ardent youth repeats his vows,
And clasps Amelia's hand.

"With thee, O maiden! sweet and fair,
How blest through life to stray,
While birdlike music fills the air,
And flowers adorn our way!

"No brighter days can gild the sky,
Than o'er our heads shall glow;
No purer streams can earth supply,
Than at our feet shall flow.

"Or, should perchance a cloud appear,
Or gales of sorrow blow,
To thee a friend would still be near,
And every care bestow."

"If side by side," the lass replies,
"We should our course pursue,
Might every morn serene arise,
And rich with honeyed dew!

"Would but my widowed mother's will
Our tender thoughts approve,
What else would seem to promise ill,
Or break the flow of love?

“One easy word, oh, wouldst thou say,
To cheat the tempter's lure,
It might her anxious fears allay,
And make our bliss secure.”

“That word,” he cries, “I utter now—
For I thy thoughts explore—
These lips that speak the solemn vow,
Shall touch the cup no more.”

“Oh, then,” she breathes, “thy doubts resign :
To yon majestic tree,
As clings that frail and trusting vine,
So clings my heart to thee.”

“And as yon oak,” the swain resumes,
“Sustains that fragile vine,
So shall my form, whatever comes,
Give full support to thine.”

She tells by looks that light her face
How well her soul believes,
And on her lips, with modest grace,
The seal of love receives.

II.

Far up the east the sun had wheeled,
And warm had grown the day,
When leisurely, through lane and field,
Amelia took her way.

Fair was the scene that opened round—
The slopes with corn were green,
The distant hills with woods were crowned,
While valleys smiled between.

The flowers arose beside her feet,
The clover was in bloom,
And every breeze that fanned the heat
Came laden with perfume.

Now squirrels frisked on fence and tree,
Now rang a robin's call,
While bobolinks, o'erfilled with glee,
Tried hard to shout it all.

But as Amelia walked along,
No beauties struck her eye,
Nor had a bird such gift of song
As could a joy supply.

Her thought were forward on the spot
To which her steps were turned:
When nearing home, oh, who has not
With tenderest feelings burned?

But cold to her a doubt had come,
A doubt unfelt before—
Perhaps the place so long her home,
Would seem like home no more.

Long days and nights had gone around
Since last her feet were there ;
Since last she heard its voices sound,
And knew a mother's care.

Long days and nights that mother's heart
A grievous weight had borne ;
Oh, had some wretch, with treacherous art,
Her darling from her torn ?

Her fears already had foretold
The grief about to fall ;
She knew her withered hands must hold
A cup o'erbrimmed with gall.

Ah ! many a deed that shuns the day,
By all the stars is seen ;
But God has clearer eyes than they,
And sees through every screen.

While darkness on the world abides,
To Edwin waiting near
The fair Amelia softly glides,
Without distrust or fear.

And ere a wood or hillock stands
Tinged with the morning sun,
The links of law have joined their hands,
And bound their lives in one.

Though, thus, a mother's wish and will
A child perversely spurns,
Yet all a mother's nature still
Deep in her bosom yearns.

For when, at length, she sees her child
Approach her open door,
Though stirred at first with passions wild,
She stirs with pity more.

But while she reasons and reproves,
In cold Amelia's heart
Not one relenting feeling moves,
No stings of conscience smart.

With proud disdain of riper years,
She sends a rude reply :

“Cry, mother, cry, until thy tears
Have wept their fountain dry.

“My reason is the guide I own,
No other can I take ;
And if I err, on me alone
The dire result must break.”*

*I well remember the time when she whom I call Amelia returned home after her clandestine marriage. As great tears were rolling down the cheeks of my grandmother—yes, the old lady of whom you here get a glimpse was my grandmother—as great tears were rolling down her cheeks, and she was sobbing as if her heart would break, her daughter was so cruel as to say: “Well, cry it out, mother.”

From pouting lips, such heartless words
Could beauty ever fling ?
But scant our praise of brilliant birds,
If harsh the notes they sing.

III.

Beside a low and wooded hill
A modest cottage stands ;
Its front surveys a limpid rill,
And fields of level lands.

In other days, a cheerful look
On all the landscape lay ;
It seemed a calm and happy nook,
Where love might live its day.

Well-ordered ranks of chosen trees
Rose o'er the house in pride,
While various shrubs, arranged to please,
Could not their graces hide.

The garden walks and all the grounds
Revealed the hand of care ;
And so the seasons in their rounds
Dispensed their favors there.

In those bright days Amelia's heart
Was as the seasons gay ;
Or, if a tear presumed to start,
She wiped it soon away.

Borne through her rooms with sprightly tread,
And full of cheerful song,
So clear a light her presence shed,
No gloom could tarry long.

When homeward from the weary field
Her Edwin turned at night,
The welcome on her face revealed
Made all his labors light.

But now, alas, from that retreat,
Where once such days were known,
Where every hope and trust was sweet,
The charm of life has flown.

The sweets we seem allowed to sip,
In this mysterious world,
Oft strangely cheat the eager lip,
And down to dust are hurled.

So fortune from Amelia's hands
Her flavored goblet flings,
And sternly to her lips commands
Draughts of all bitter things.

Dark grows the vision on her view,
Which in her earlier days
A golden light around her threw,
And opened flowery ways.

False, then, is man—so dead to truth
That all his vows are vain ?
Is love a transient fire of youth,
Or but the lust of gain ?

Oh, hearts there are, devoted, true,
And which for love's dear sake,
Would rough and dangerous ways pursue,
And strong attachments break.

But some there are of baser mold,
Whose lips with vows may burn,
Yet prove fallacious, selfish, cold,
As coals to ashes turn.

Or vices, robed as angels fair,
With winning voice may call,
And heart and conscience overbear,
And bind them in their thrall.

A cup there is which oft deceives,
And mocks the might of man ;
How many a life it darkened leaves,
Which bright as morn began !

Not as he was is Edwin now ;
His lips have pressed the bowl
Till marks of vice deform his brow,
And passion rules his soul.

Unnerved, to honest toil averse,
He shreds his time away,
And so incurs the idler's curse—
Led more and more astray.

He treads the downward course of vice
Till vice no longer shames ;
What now to him is kind advice ?
What, God's commanding claims ?

His sunny fields neglected lie,
To useless weeds resigned ;
Turn where it may, the passer's eye
No trace of thrift can find.

His barn to ruin slowly falls,
His trees untutored grow ;
While beasts that famish in their stalls
Are signs of other woe.

His wife looks round her drear abode,
And heaves a smothered sigh ;
Oh, how sustain her cruel load,
With no kind helper nigh ?

Ah ! he on whom her heart should lean
In every want and pain,
Is but the weapon, barbed and keen,
By which her peace is slain.

In scanty robes, with stinted fare,
No day to her is blest ;
Nor does the night relieve her care,
Or balm her suffering breast.

Oft when her husband comes at eve,
His eyes with madness glare ;
The ill portent her babes perceive,
And shrink behind her chair.

And when she lifts her wasted form
To shield their helpless age,
Full on herself descends the storm—
The storm of hellish rage.

Thus wretched now, if forth she casts
Her sad and brimming eyes,
She sees beyond the pelting blasts
No brighter dawn arise.

Hope, that blest orb whose friendly ray
Lures mortal footsteps on,
Has ceased to gleam along her way,
And from her sky is gone.

IV.

The faded leaves bestrew the ground,
Mute heralds of decay ;
The moaning wind like dirges sound,
O'er seasons passed away.

To those still bounds where sleep is long,
And morning is delayed,
There goes one more to join the throng
In dust already laid.

'Twas not the force of slow disease
That brought him to the dead ;
Nor stealthy age, by sure degrees,
Wore out life's slender thread.

As when the air is deeply still,
And scarce a cloud is dark,
A sudden bolt surcharged to kill,
Leaps downward to its mark ;

So, while on life he still presumed,
While yet amid his prime,
Swift fell from heaven a force that doomed,
And smote him out of time.

But few the moments that had passed,
Since lightly from him fell
The awful words—perhaps his last—
“ Soon I shall be in hell ! ”*

*At the time which my story has now reached, the man whom I call Edwin was the owner of a spirited team of horses. While making a display of them in front of the tavern to which he was accustomed to resort, some bystander remarked : “ That is too good a team for such a man to

Oh, sometimes, does a thoughtless speech
A sober sense assume ;
Become a prophecy, and preach
The near approach of doom ?

Oh, when, in oaths, the wicked call
For curses on their head,
Does God, sometimes, let curses fall,
And take them as they said ?

Poor Edwin lay, where, o'er the rocks,
His furious wheels had rolled
And dashed him down ; blood-stained his locks,
His limbs outstretched and cold.

Far ran the news ; a breathless awe
On all the people stole ;
What follows vice with force of law,
Stood clear to every soul.

Could one have thought, when bright the sun
On Edwin's birth arose,
That he so sad a race would run ?
Would life so darkly close ?

own." To which he replied : " Yes, a good team ! It will carry me to hell in twenty minutes." He was intoxicated, of course ; and, giving his horses the lash as he spoke, he started homeward. Twenty minutes took him to the place where he was killed, the wheels of his wagon running upon a ledge of rocks and throwing him violently to the ground. I have looked upon those solemn rocks many a time.

Now, o'er his mute and coffined clay
The pale Amelia bends;
Oh, what shall be her strength and stay,
While such a weight descends?

As kindly neighbors place him low,
Too well her bosom feels
What bitterness, what pain and woe
The tempting cup conceals.

The light of day she scarce discerns,
Nor heeds the waning hours,
As from the sacred ground she turns,
And seeks her native bowers.

The dear old spot where once she played,
Where still a mother lives,
Extends again a welcome shade,
And all its comfort gives.

Slow drag the years, while on her heart
A constant sorrow weighs;
One youthful folly leaves its smart,
And shadows all her days.

When in our youth would we but see
Where lie our proper way, S
How calm, how happy, might we be
When time has turned us gray.

CHIPS UNDER THE SNOW.

[It was a winter uncommonly cold, and the ground was covered thickly with snow. I was standing at my window looking out at the forbidding aspect of the world, when my attention was drawn to an elderly woman, one of my nearest neighbors. She had a room in the house occupied by her son, but was much dependent on her own exertions, not only for the comforts, but even for the necessities of life. She was now out in the bitter weather, feeling about in the snow for a few bits of wood to keep herself warm.]

SHE carefully gathers the chips of wood,
Gathers one by one from under the snow ;
Oh, if the great Father in heaven is good,
Why does he on her so little bestow ?

She gathers the chips from under the snow,
While on her thin cheeks and through her gray
hair
The rough winter winds remorselessly blow,
And needles of frost are thick in the air.

But once her thin cheeks were rounded and fair,
And once her gray locks were glossy and
brown,
And once of the world she had her full share,
And asked not for more her blessings to
crown.

Her boy's merry voice was a song in her ear,
His misshapen words oft moved her to
smile;

For more than he knew her heart he could
cheer,

Could more than he knew the dull moments
beguile.

When night o'er the world its shadows had
spread,

She laid him to rest and covered him warm;
And if the storm-wings but rustled o'erhead,
She doubled the folds above his dear form.

Still tenderer grew her motherly care

When pallid he lay, and wasted and weak;
Nor would she her toils and vigils forbear,
Till roses of health rebloomed on his cheek.

Her boy was her hope. She looked to the time
When all her fond love he well would repay;
When forth he would stand a man in his prime,
And be to her age a comfort and stay.

Ah, hope is a bud which never may bloom;
Though love's sleepless eye may watch o'er
it keep;

Yet some hidden bane its life may consume,
And leave the wrung heart to wonder and
weep.

The son is a man, tall, hardy and hale,
The mother is old and feeble of limb;
He leaned upon her when slender and frail,
Oh, surely she now may lean upon him!

Alas, there are hearts akin to a stone,
Hearts where compassion no softness has
shed.
And such now is he; for, cheerless and lone,
In life's roughest ways he leaves her to tread.

She misses him now! How sad is the thought,
That the paths of his youth are strange to his
feet;
That, mocking the wisdom which once he was
taught,
He loves the low place where the sensual
meet!

Alas, he is there; and filling his lips
With cups more inflamed than innocence
knows;
Is there, while his mother is searching for chips
With cold-reddened hands, beneath the loose
snows.

Rich with a few chips, she turns to her room,
And rouses her fire with sedulous pains,
To relieve, if she can, the chill and the gloom,
And urge the lag blood along her old veins.

We know the great Father in heaven is good,
For freely his gifts he scatters below ;
And did we but order our lives as we should,
Along in our ways how blest we might go !

No ; not to God's works, their friction or flaws,
May men their unrest or sufferings trace ;
The evils they bear find ever their cause
In follies, in errors, or sins of the race.

See thousands, by lusts of the flesh overborne,
Pursue the sure road to sorrow and pain ;
See thousands, though voices may warn them,
and warn,
Yet lift the vile cup and drain it, and drain.

While others, whose cheeks never burn with a
blush,
Deal out the strong draughts to all who will
pay ;
Thus evils, as streams from full fountains rush,
Break forth over homes, and flow far away.

What mystery shadows these human affairs!

Oh, where is the man whose wisdom can tell
Why God with all sin so patiently bears?
Why earth is so like a province of hell?

How oft a hard lot to virtue is dealt,
A blot on her name, a shaft in her breast!
While guilt, the terrors of conscience unfelt,
Goes gaily along, unsmitten and blest.

While some proudly move with hands full of
gold,
Or leisurely sit by their fire's warm glow,
How many in want, enfeebled or old,
Must glean their scant wood from under the
snow!

There sure is some shore, though yet out of
sight,
Where all the dark things which puzzle us
here,
Shall brighten to proofs of wisdom and might,
And be to all eyes illumined and clear.

Then woe to the souls that cleave to the wrong,
And woe to the souls on others that prey!
For just is our God, though silent so long.
Yes, vengeance is his, and he will repay!

CENTENNIAL YANKEE DOODLE.

[Written on the occasion of the one hundredth anniversary of American independence, and published in the *New York Evening Post*, June 28, 1876.]

BUNKER HILL had sent around
The roar of Britain's lion;
There a patriotic few had found
A glorious spot to die on.

CHORUS—Yankee Doodle—swell the song,
Let all the people sing it;
Let them shout it full and strong,
And through the nation ring it.

Many a valiant bosom burned
At news of camp and battle;
Men from shop and counter turned,
From forest, field and cattle.

Forth they trooped in homespun coats,
Each with his sword or musket—
Folks at home must sow the oats,
And plant the corn and husk it.

Though their foe was strong and brave,
They did not fear to meet him;
Scarce a thing they thought of save
The way they meant to beat him.

And as fiercer, fiercer grew
The rage of war's red demon,
Still abroad the shout they threw:
"We dare to live as freemen!"

Yes, our sires were bold and true,
E'en Britain owned them manly;
Noble were our mothers, too,
And bore their share right grandly.

What for us our fathers bore
Our words can never measure;
In our memories, evermore,
Their virtues let us treasure.

Freedom's blessings let us prize,
And hand them down to others;
But to save them—hear, ye wise—
We still must raise up mothers.

While our schools for rich and poor
We plant among the people,
Close by each we should be sure
To raise a Christian steeple.

So shall smile, in dew and sun,
Our pastures and our plowlands,
And our nation's years shall run
To hundreds and to thousands.

CHORUS—Yankee Doodle is our song,
Our fathers loved to sing it;
We the strain will still prolong,
And down the ages ring it.

1876.

THE PERFECT LIFE.

“LET there be light”—the darkness fled
Before the primal morn;
“Let there be light,” again was said,
And Bethlehem's Babe was born.

Men groped in darkness till, with him,
Came truth's unclouded day;
The way of life and peace was dim
Till brightened in his ray.

Not all the ages past had sent
One so to virtue true ;
His life, a robe without a rent
For faults to darken through.

Thus virtue, in a perfect form,
Once wore the flesh we wear ;
With human heart alive and warm,
With human features fair.

No thought e'er touched his secret soul
That left the slightest stain ;
No feeling o'er his bosom stole
That could the place profane.

What though the world with glories shone
To tempt his feet aside ?
His father's will, and that alone,
Was still his changeless guide.

Unlike the thousands who but drift
Where strongest currents haste,
He counted life too rich a gift
On fruitless aims to waste.

He filled his days with kindly deeds,
He blessed with hand and word ;
And where he saw the deeper needs,
His deeper pity stirred.

On such as mocked his lofty claims,
Or proudly stood aloof,
He sent no hot, consuming flames,
Yet scourged them with reproof.

For frowns of neither wealth nor power
Could pale his fearless cheek;
If sternest truths became the hour,
Such truths he dared to speak.

Yet always patient, calm, serene,
In quiet meekness strong,
His matchless grandeur most was seen
When most he suffered wrong.

Each day alike so wise, so good,
He made his life sublime;
The grandest Man that ever stood
Upon the hills of time.

His bitterest foes, persistent, keen,
Have not, in all the past,
For any fault or blemish seen,
A stone against him cast.

Ye who the heights of life would reach,
Your pattern here behold!
His life can better precepts teach
Than all the schools of old.

Oh, when I test my life by thine,
Thou of unsullied name,
Well may I blush for works like mine,
And veil my head in shame.

Yet show me mercy, I implore,
And grant that I may be
More molded to thy will—be more
In soul, in life, like thee.

1877.

THE HEART SURRENDERING.

WHY, my heart, why yet rebellious?
Why this hopeless strife pursue?
God thy Maker, holy, jealous,
Still must claim the glory due.

He, beyond the olden ages,
Crowned his Son as Zion's King;
Thus Eternal Love engages
Nations to his Christ to bring.

Oh, shall thousands, deeply feeling
Guilt and need, to Jesus turn?
Shall the vilest, proudest, kneeling,
At his feet delight to learn?

Yet shall I, still earthward gazing,
Coldly hear that matchless name;
Slight that love which, deep, amazing,
Fills the saints with holy flame?

O my heart, to him surrender,
Pressing through thy doubts and fears;
Let his love, so sweet, so tender,
Melt thy hardness all to tears.
While his heart is o'er thee yearning,
Go, his royal scepter kiss,
Lest his anger, kindling, burning,
Blight thy hope of life and bliss.

1871.

PSALM XLII.

BENEATH the noontide's burning beams,
As pants the hart for cooling streams,
So pants my soul for thee, my God!
Oh, when shall I thy presence feel,
Oh, when wilt thou thy face reveal,
Or bring me to thy dear abode?

The tears which daily dim my eyes
Declare the grief that on me lies,
And tell the world thy long delay;
While sadly to remembrance spring
The hours I loved to pray and sing,
With those who kept thy holy day.

Yet, O my soul, why bowed so low,
Mere driftwood on the tides of woe?

Why nerveless meet the stormy days?
Hope still in God; his grace at length
Shall give my fainting spirit strength,
And fill my mouth with glowing praise.

E'en now, amid this 'whelming deep,
And while thy pity seems to sleep,
For thee I thirst, to thee I call;
I count my daily blessings o'er,
My morning and my evening store,
And see my Father's hand in all.

Then why, my soul, so saddened still?
Hope, hope in God, whose sovereign will,
I yet shall see, is just and good;
Bright through the gloom his smile shall break,
And all my freshened powers awake
To praise my Helper and my God.

1870.

PSALM LV. 22.

“CAST thy burdens on the Lord:”

Heed, O mortal, heed his voice,
Then will he such grace afford
As shall make thy soul rejoice.

All thy guilt to Jesus bring,
All thy sorrow, need and care ;
Peace within thy breast shall spring,
If thou leave thy burdens there.

Calmly trust his goodness still,
Though thy dearest wishes fall ;
Calmly let his sovereign will
Plan thy life, and rule it all.

If each day its evil brings,
Can impatience make it less ?
But the heart that bows, or sings,
Scarcely feels the burden press.

Let the world deride, defame ;
Truth was never yet o'erthrown ;
Truth shall brighten yet thy name,
While thy foes its might shall own.

Heard in heaven is every sigh,
Seen is every secret tear ;
Jesus pities now on high
As he used to pity here.

Then, O mortal, heed the call ;
Go, thy burdens on him lay ;
Find in him thy help, thy all,
Till shall end thy fleeting day.

ON PSALM LXXV.

THANKS, thanks, O Lord, I give to thee,
For all thy love and care ;
That thou art ever near to me
Thy wondrous works declare.

There's not a blossom at my feet
But tells that thou art here ;
While Nature's voices all repeat
The lesson to my ear.

Some needed gifts to every day
Thy providence assigns ;
Or if, sometimes, thy gifts delay,
Still clear thy goodness shines.

Thy hand, with sovereign touch unseen,
Directs the world's affairs,
And over all that men may mean,
Thy schemes right onward bears.

Since stands the world for Zion's sake,
If rulers rise or fall,
If perils come and nations shake,
Thy saints are safe through all.

Then I, if thine, must share with them
Thy constant watch and care ;
With them, within thy mighty realm,
I have a part to bear.

I am a mote in every surge
That sweeps the human sea,
And from creation's outer verge
Are lines that reach to me.

For me the arch of heaven remains,
The sun pursues his course,
And Nature, through her wide domains,
Keeps all her laws in force.

Thus do the seasons, as they shift,
Strew blessings on my way,
Each comes with some peculiar gift
To drive some want away.

Some good for every sense I own
The changing months prepare;
What beauties o'er the world are strown!
What odors fill the air!

But in the scheme of saving grace
Were stranger thoughts of me;
Why in that scheme had I a place?
What was my worth to thee?

My thanks, my warmest thanks, I pay
For all thy love and care;
That thou art near me every day,
Thy wondrous works declare.

THE CHURCH SAFE.

No, Jesus ; never shall thy Church,
To all thy servants dear,
Be banished from the haunts of men,
Or fail to find thee near.

For changeless is that wondrous love
Which thou for her hast shown—
Love which, to suffer for her sake,
Could bring thee from thy throne.

By blood redeemed and made thine own,
Thy guards around her stand ;
Nor can the powers of earth and hell
E'er pluck her from thy hand.

The arm upraised to smite her down
Can only serve thy will ;
The blows it may have leave to give
Shall prove thy goodness still.

The best laid schemes to thwart her aims,
Or lead her to her fall—
Lo ! one o'erruling touch of thine
To folly turns them all.

Her foes have fought against her long,
And deadliest darts have hurled ;
Yet still she lives and holds her way,
A power in all the world.

To all thy words of promise true,
Thou wilt with her abide,
Her life, her strength, and her defense,
Till time itself has died.

1878.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

WITHDRAWN with chosen friends to Hermon's
height,

One who, as man, the walks of men had trod,
Transforms and glows intense, a very God !
And lo ! two saints long dead, or lost to sight,
Are there alive, and with the Man Divine

Hold converse deep, intent to search and
know

What means his coming death, his utter woe.
His followers touch the glory's outer line
Awed and bewildered ; yet, among such friends,
On ground so hallowed, they prefer to stay.
If all which thus on Hermon's summit blends
Is but a shade of heaven's eternal day,
Oh, who from heaven would wish to call a
friend,

Or dread to its full glories to ascend ?

1879.

PSALM CII. 13-18.

As a desert rude and bare,
See, unhappy Zion lies;
All that once was strong and fair,
Ravished from her children's eyes.
But her children love her still,
For their dearest memories cling
Round the high and holy hill
Where they used to pray and sing.
Even in her stones and dust
Still they take a sad delight;
For her ruins, still they trust,
Yet shall rise to life and light.
Oft for her they sigh and weep,
Oft for her their cries ascend;
Nor contented can they sleep
Till her woes shall have an end.
Not a breath they spend in vain,
God will answer soon their prayer,
Favor Zion once again,
And appear in glory there.
Written for the coming days,
When all this shall be reviewed,
Hosts the God of grace shall praise,
Hosts by sovereign grace renewed.

THE BIBLE OUR GUIDE.

A PILGRIM on this rugged shore,
And doubtful of my way,
I ask a guide to go before,
I ask for cloudless day.

As, when o'erhead the stars are bright,
The earth['] lies dim below,
So lies in reason's twinkling light
The way my feet should go.

But lo! the time of darkness ends—
The east its gates unbars,
And up the arch of heaven ascends
The orb that hides the stars.

Thus quenched in floods of stronger light
Are reason's feeble rays,
When truth's clear sun upon our night
Pours down its steady blaze.

O welcome light! O precious boon!
It floods the world with day;
Beneath its full, perpetual noon
The lost may find their way.

That perfect light, thy Word, O God,
Shall be my guide, my boast,
Till all the weary way be trod
To yonder happier coast.

PSALM CXXXVI.

Oh, give thanks to our Jehovah,
For there's none so good and pure ;
Oh, give thanks to him whose kingdom
Circles all, and stands secure ;
For his mercy
Ever, ever shall endure.

Sun, and moon, and stars unnumbered
He has set in yonder heights ;
Sun, to make the day a gladness,
Moon and stars for evening lights ;
So his mercy
Breaks the gloom of all our nights.

At his word the fruitful seasons
On the hills and valleys brood,
That from earth's exhaustless bounty
All may have their daily food ;
So his mercy
Fills us with eternal good.

When in sin's distressing bondage,
He for us a Ransom found ;
Then our senses sweetly opened
To the gospel's joyful sound ;
For his mercy
Does beyond our guilt abound.

Now he leads us as his people
Past the foes that rise before,
And at last will bring us victors
To the promised happy shore;
There his mercy
We shall sing forevermore.

Oh, give thanks to our Jehovah,
Throned in heaven, and God alone !
Oh, let all who share his blessings
Make his name and wonders known ;
For his mercy
Is enduring as his throne.

1879.

SIN FORGIVEN ON EARTH.

“The Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins.”—
Matt. ix. 6.

My sins, my sins— I hate them all,
Of peace, of life, the deadliest bane ;
I feel them as a mighty thrall
From which I try to break in vain.

Against the glorious King above
The base, rebellious deeds were done ;
Against that deep and yearning love
Which should my stubborn heart have won.

My sins, my sins—a burdening weight
Here on my helpless soul they lie ;
From peril, from my sad estate,
Oh, whither, whither shall I fly?

But need a sinner groan and wail
Along the confines of despair?
If cries for mercy may avail,
He may perhaps in mercy share.

A light was breaking in our skies,
The day of hope was flushing in,
When God appeared in human guise,
With power on earth to pardon sin.

On earth my sins must be forgiven,
Else on my soul they still remain ;
Else from the seats I must be driven,
To which the just alone attain.

Forgiveness! Oh, I need it more
Than gold, or lands, or aught beside :
What were the earth with all its ore,
If this one blessing were denied?

I crave forgiveness now, with all
That full forgiveness sweetly brings—
Peace, which no fears or griefs appall,
Rest, which from hope in Jesus springs.

Since Christ has borne the curse for me,
 Grace far beyond my guilt abounds ;
 While I in God a Father see,
 Who leads me, keeps me, and surrounds.

Ho, ye whose hearts are still enticed
 To things of far inferior worth,
 Behold the Man, this wondrous Christ,
 Who still forgives our sins on earth.

1887.

"I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU ORPHANS."

["I will not leave you comfortless."—John xiv. 18. The Greek is, "I will not leave you *orphans*."]

"I will not leave you orphans;"
 Thus, when his hour was near,
 Did Christ, the gracious Master,
 His sad disciples cheer.
 The love he long had borne them
 Not death itself should chill;
 When throned again in glory
 That love should bless them still.

To us, far down the ages,
The Savior comes again ;
Comes with his word and Spirit,
To comfort and sustain.
We know he still attends us,
Wherever lies our way ;
And in our soul's deep chambers
How much we hear him say !

No, not unhappy orphans,
Perplexed with various needs,
Whom none regards with pity,
Or shelters, clothes, and feeds.
We have a loving Father
Who makes our portion sure ,
The world is his, and therefore
There's plenty for his poor.

We all are in his keeping,
Our bodies and our souls ;
It is his tender wisdom
That all our lives controls.
No, no, we are not orphans ;
There's not a day but brings
Some token of his goodness,
Some gift of precious things.

What though the world neglect us,
And friends abate their love?
What though our foes pursue us,
As hawks pursue the dove?
We have a loving Father
Who always is the same,
And who, at his good pleasure,
Will vindicate our name.

In all our pains and sorrows
He kindly takes a share;
Else greater were our burdens
Than our poor flesh could bear.
If sometimes for our profit
He must afflict, chastise,
Our sorrows then are blessings
That come in dark disguise.

When travel-worn, or heart-sick,
Or when with cares oppressed,
We go to him as children,
And lean upon his breast;
So when the coming shadows
Shall close our troubled day,
We there may lie, all-trustful,
And sleep ourselves away.

REST.

[On the occasion of my seventieth birthday.]

REST, rest; how sweet the sound
To wanderers here below,
Who no release have ever found
From toil and pain and woe!

They tell us of a shore
More beautiful than this,
Where none e'er grieve or suffer more,
Or long for deeper bliss.

No day afflicts with cares,
No night obscures the hills,
For time is not, and change forbears
To throng the place with ills.

I know not what surprise
Awaits each entering guest;
I only know that somewhere lies
That land of light and rest.

The light is from the throne
Of Christ, the Lamb who died;
The rest is known to those alone
Who near his throne abide.

Rest, rest ; how sweet the sound,
Here 'mid our toils and pains,
Where human passions surge around,
Where sin's disorder reigns.

Oh, come the eventide,
With glory-lighted west,
When I shall cast my robes aside,
And enter into rest.

1882.

IN MY FATHER'S WORLD.

YES, I am in my Father's world !
He made the whole—the earth, the sky,
All great, all good, all beauteous things
That meet and fix my wondering eye.

My Father rules the world he made—
Rules at his will its vast affairs,
And, over all that men propose,
His own great plan right onward bears.

Where'er my devious footsteps turn,
Beyond his realm I can not stray ;
Still falls his sunshine on my head,
His power upholds me on my way.

Nowhere but in my Father's world
 Could I so safe or favored be;
My food, my drink, all common gifts,
 Are bounties from his hand to me.

Should comforts fail, or should my store
 Be scantier than my neighbor's share,
Still I am in my Father's world,
 And need not vex my soul with care.

Should fountains shrink, and fields grow sere,
 And harvests pant o'er thirsty land,
I know I have a Father still
 Who holds the rain-clouds in his hand.

If skies are black, and tempests rage,
 Or wild tornadoes sweep the plains,
I know my Father rides the storm,
 Nor should I tremble while he reigns.

If sickness pales my brow, if loss
 Or other ills be on me laid,
Why should I fret or pine, or be
 Of e'en death's rustling wing afraid?

My Father knows my inmost soul,
 With every pulse of feeling there;
He knows, and will afford his aid
 To every earnest call of prayer.

Yes, I am in my Father's world,
 Whose will, whose way, is always best;
 Come good, come ill, I meet my lot,
 And calmly in his pleasure rest.

1883.

THE CROSS.

God forbid that I should glory,
 Save in Jesus and his cross!
 For that great and wondrous story
 I would count all things as loss.

What were all that earth could grant me—
 All its wealth to either pole—
 If my sins were left to haunt me,
 If my guilt were on my soul?

Jesus found me, lost, despairing,
 And my hapless state retrieved,
 All my burden lifting, bearing,
 When my heart in him believed.

Jesus saves! He cleanses, whitens
 Souls of men, and gives them peace;
 Such a peace as death but heightens
 Into joys that never cease.

God forbid that I should glory,
 Save in Jesus and his cross!
 All that earth can heap before me
 I for Jesus from me toss.

1884.

GOD IN ISRAEL'S CAMP.

(See 1 Sam. iv. 1-11.)

While in Aphek lie the bands
Which Philistia sends to war,
Shouts repeated o'er and o'er
Roll along the startled lands—
Shouts that rise from Israel's camp.

Bursts so glad on Israel's side,
Thrill through Aphek with alarm;
Weakens every warrior's arm
As the tidings flutter wide—
“God has come to Israel's camp.”

It is he whom Egypt knew,
Who with plagues distressed her land,
And with corpses heaped her strand;
What can those Philistines do
If in Israel's camp he bides?

Thither has his ark been borne—
Symbol of his awful power—
That in this disastrous hour,
When all hearts are sad, forlorn,
God may for his people fight.

Dreadful is Jehovah's name,
Mighty deeds he oft hath done ;
Yet to-day the passing sun
Shall not see his vengeance flame
On the foes of Israel's tribes.

What are men with all their craft,
All their force of hand and will,
Unless God give nerve and skill ?
At one foeman's whizzing shaft
Thousands may in terror flee.

Israel hath despised his laws,
Dared to other service turn ;
Therefore doth his anger burn,
Therefore he forsakes their cause—
God is not in Israel's camp.

Israel still hath many foes,
All in league to do her harm ;
Yet should Israel take alarm ?
Shall not hosts in vain oppose,
If her God be in her tents ?

God, her God, is robed with might,
Lord of earth and all the spheres ;
All along her troubled years
He has held from yonder height
His broad shield above her camp.

But let Israel still be true
To the altars where she bows;
There repeat her sacred vows,
There inflame her love anew,
Lest her God upon her frown.

Let her foes exhaust their rage
On the summits where she stands,
Pressing round with all their bands;
Bootless is the war they wage
While her God is in her camp.

With the Lord to lead and aid,
With her love and zeal aglow,
Forth to conflict she may go,
And the farthest shores invade;
Then the world shall be her camp.

THE LAND WITHOUT A TEAR.

THERE is a land without a tear,
Without a secret sigh or moan;
From skies forever calm and clear
Glad beams on every soul are thrown.

The place which now is our abode,
Our gracious God has richly blessed;
Nor should a single gift bestowed,
Meet with one cold and thankless breast.

But though there's many a sunny lane,
And many a joy along our years,
There's yet so much of grief and pain,
We name the earth "the Vale of Tears."

How oft our dawning hopes o'ercloud,
Or sink behind a gloomy west !
How oft we move amid the crowd
With hearts by hidden woes oppressed !

We stand at times beside the dead,
Our friends, whose lips shall speak no more ;
For all the bitter tears we shed
Can not one throb of life restore.

Before us lies the better land,
Where sad nor sick nor poor are found ;
And there erelong we hope to stand,
Thrilled through by every sight and sound.

How strange, how sweet, when all have met,
The good of every name and tongue,
To see no face with sorrow wet,
To hear no groan from anguish wrung !

Oh, when our nights of grief are long,
With only glimmering lights to cheer,
How can the eager wish be wrong,
To reach the land without a tear ?

IN DIVINE STRENGTH.

[‘ I will go in the strength of the Lord God : I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only.’
Psa. lxxi. 16.]

I WILL go in the strength of the Lord,
In the strength of the Lord, my God ;
If the might of his grace he afford,
How firmly my way may be trod !

My strength is the strength of a reed,
I falter and slide to the wrong ;
But when from myself I am freed,
In Christ I am blameless and strong.

Of only his merit I speak,
When pressing my suit at the throne ;
His merit, for all that I seek,
Avails as if wholly my own.

I know I must face till the end
All the forces of folly and sin ;
But he will sustain and defend,
And I the life-battle shall win.

My Lord is the Sovereign supreme,
He rules all affairs at his will ;
And though mysteries darken his scheme,
I trust him and worship him still.

With wonderful skill he can turn
The bitterest portion to sweet;
And if in his furnace I burn,
I know I am cleansed by the heat.

He answers the cries of my soul,
And fills all my wants to the brim;
And through all the seasons that roll,
The springs of my joy are in him.

As over the tracts of the past,
Supported by him I have trod,
So still on my course to the last,
I will go in the strength of my God.

1886.

THE DEVIL'S MILLS.

THE devil has mills, and they grind, and they
grind,

With ample results to the race of mankind;
Their hum is as constant by night as by day,
All the time grinding, grinding, grinding away.

The devil has plenty of help in his mills,
Each choosing quite freely the place that he
fills;

And though they receive but the poorest of pay,
Yet still in their places they willingly stay.

They claim, where they are, to be richer in
cheer

Than the saints who keep from their fellowship
clear;

And their claim may be just, if revel and mirth
Are the best of our joys, and all life is worth.

But they, and the thousands who deal in the
stuff

Produced at those mills, have troubles enough;
Their words may be jocund, with smiles they
may glow,

But their hearts carry aches wherever they go.

The mills of the devil incessantly run,
Yet do not as much as he wishes were done;
For One far superior hedges him round,
And narrows his work to a definite bound.

That One, the single o'ermastering Will,
Works out his own ends with infinite skill;
His throne is the center of whatever is,
And all other wheels are wheels within his.

Though the mills of God may grind very slow,
Yet ever around their mighty wheels go,
And at the right hour will grind verysmall
The devil, his mills, his servants and all.

GOD'S HIDDEN HAND.

[With reference to Psalm cv.]

GOD need not thunder from his throne,
Nor halt at noon the rolling sun,
To make his mighty presence known,
To show us how his will is done.

His wrath may come in quiet form
As surely as in fire or flood,
As surely as in hail and storm,
Or waters turned to sickening blood.

He needs but touch with silent hand
Some hidden force that Nature bears,
To send his judgments o'er the land,
To smite the wicked unawares.

There may be doom in sunny rays,
Or in the dark and sullen air;
Or it may cross our busy ways,
We know not even when nor where.

A solemn life—to act and sleep
Where perils lurk on every side,
Where sudden shafts of ill may leap
From coverts where we thought to hide.

But need we therefore quail or chafe,
Or any path of duty shun?
The friends of God are always safe—
“*Immortal till their work is done.*”*

Without his leave, no wasting plague
That with its arrows arms the day,
No nightly terror, strange and vague,
Can touch the bloom of health away.

Let saints be calm through all events,
Calm, though their faith be but a spark;
There's always light in Israel's tents,
Though all the world around be dark.

1886.

THE TOUCH OF FAITH.

THERE came with the crowd a suffering woman,
And she said in the depths of her heart,
“If near him I steal, and touch but his garment,
I know my disease shall depart.”

[*George Whitfield, in a letter to James Hervey, wrote:
“*We are immortal till our work is done.*”]

The Master perceived that her hand had
touched him,

And he knew there was faith in her touch;
Her faith he repaid, dismissing the sickness
From which she had suffered so much.

O thou, whose burden is trouble or sorrow,
Or whose sins are a weightier grief,
In vain from the world, from all it can offer,
Thou hast sought for a moment's relief.

But do not despair; the Master still blesses,
And nature still owns his commands;
He wears a rich robe, the robe of his priesthood,
And its hem we may touch with our hands.

Though worlds are his care, and numbers
uncounted

Are constantly claiming his ear;
Though lowly thou art, unholy, unworthy,
Thou canst not unnoticed draw near.

He feels the soft touch of souls the most
shrinking,

Who scarcely have strength to believe;
He answers their touch, and doubles the blessing

They tremblingly hoped to receive.

ON THE SEA.

THE Lord is near us on the sea,
When night her starless robe has spread,
When storms have set their terrors free,
And filled our feeble souls with dread.
The foaming waters to his feet
Are as a firm, unyielding floor;
The furious winds from him retreat,
Or as soft breezes round him pour.
If so he wills, the howling sky
May not disturb our trusting breast;
We, too, may howling winds defy,
And tread the waves from crest to crest.
But if from him we turn our eyes
To scan ourselves, the sea, the gale,
At once our faithless fears arise,
Our unsupported strength must fail.
When in the floods about to sink,
As in a cold, remorseless grave,
We from the threatening horror shrink,
And call the God of might to save.
He hears our cry, and comes with speed
To lift us from our deep distress;
The more we feed our helpless need,
The freer is his love to bless.

He orders all, on sea and shore,
To work for us the good supreme;
So even trials long and sore
Are more benignant than we deem.
At length, when he shall give command,
The storms of life shall all subside;
And we shall safely reach the strand
Where all in endless calm abide.

1888.

IN A CHURCH-YARD.

HERE on this *Plain, whose circling bounds
Are woods, and hills, and rocky steeps,
I stand alone among the grassy mounds
Where many a weary mortal sleeps.

Across the fields, not far away,
The dear old home is full in view,
Where first my life unfolded to the day,
Where lightly round my boyhood flew.

The house, the trees, the hills beyond,
All wear their old, familiar face;
Can time, can distance ever break the bond
That holds me to my native place?

* Freedom Plains, Dutchess County, New York, visited
after an absence of eighteen years.

Hard by these couches of the dead
The holy house serenely stands,
Whose waiting aisles I used with joy to tread,
When Sabbaths freed my toiling hands.

Long years have passed, and devious ways
My sore and suffering feet have trod,
Since there I joined the prayer, the song of
praise,
And feasted on the word of God.

I knew the groups who thither came
From every near and far abode ;
Each youth, each maiden, each whose stooping
frame
Had carried long life's heavy load.

Where are they now ? No more, alas,
Those walks with reverent air they pace ;
A later race within the portals pass,
To worship in their vacant place.

How, lately, were my feelings chilled
To mark how great had been the change !
Familiar faces gone, the seats were filled
With those whose brows were cold and
strange.

The friends, the neighbors, whom I knew,
Whose hands were often clasped in mine,
No more the common walks of life pursue,
Nor meet in fellowship divine.

I wander o'er this burial ground,
I read the stones—each name, each date;
The worshipers I missed I here have found,
Though mute, and in a changed estate.

No household near, or more away,
But has, some day, forborne its toil,
And hither come, in sorrow's dark array,
To lay its dead beneath the soil.

Below these plain memorial stones
My own dear kindred hidden lie—
Lie hidden, but their forms, their looks, their
tones,
Can never from my memory die.

What treasures in our kindred hide,
How much to us they truly are,
We often fail to find, till they have died,
Or have been sundered from us far.

Beneath this overhanging tree,
Cold lies my childhood's chosen mate;
We parted at the school, in thoughtless glee,
Each marked for his peculiar fate.

While I was left to face the ills,
The conflicts, of the life below,
He forward went to those celestial hills,
Where life is bliss in endless flow.

It was my first deep-hearted grief,
Among my mates I felt alone ;
While death looked dreadful—it had made so
brief
The life so cheering to my own.

One other grave my search reveals,
Where beauty, worth and youth repose ;
Whose were these charms—but what the grave
conceals
I may not to the world disclose.

Around in this unconscious earth,
How many withered hopes are laid,
How many broken schemes of struggling worth,
No hint is anywhere conveyed.

All passions that disturb the breast,
All love, all hatred, here must cease ;
Here toil and weariness retire to rest,
And pain and sorrow find release.

All suffering is for those who stay,
Where time still buffets with its waves ;
For those who come, as I have come to-day,
To brood o'er griefs among the graves.

The dead, whom we so much deplore,
Have left their legacies behind ;
Not houses, lands, nor any earthly ore,
But treasures of a nobler kind.

Still flows a sweetness from their lives
That well may temper many a tear ;
One deed, one word, that in our heart survives,
May calm the griefs of many a year.

The best memorials of the dead
Are those which gratitude preserves ;
And most true honor gathers round his head
Who less himself than others serves.

It is but just to fix in stone
All worthy lives, all noble deeds ;
Since scores in life's hard war are overthrown
For one who notably succeeds.

But falsehood keeps its nature still,
Nor less excites a knowing smile,
Though put in specious words, and cut with
skill
Upon a lofty granite pile.

So closes life : all paths beneath
The skies, meet at the grave and end ;
Here all alike to time and man bequeath
Their finished works, as they descend.

Why toil for riches, honor, fame?

Those who the world's high places hold,
Alike with those of lower rank and name,
Mix here with undistinguished mold.

My musings end: the day declines,
And I must leave this hallowed spot,
Constrained to move within the rigid lines
That fix and bound my destined lot.

I leave behind the dearest dust
The chambers of the earth contain,
Without the comfort of a hope or trust
That I shall hither come again.

To landscapes arched by other skies
My slow, reluctant steps I bend,
Not knowing what dark days shall yet surprise,
Nor where my course of life shall end.

It were to human nature sweet,
If those by blood and birth allied,
Could all at last from distant places meet,
And lie in burial side by side.

But wheresoe'er our graves are made,
We know there is a happier shore,
Where kindred, parted here, shall be repaid
With closer union than before.

This knowledge, this inspiring trust,
We owe to Him who once was slain ;
He from their graves will animate the just,
To share with him his endless reign.

1887.

FAREWELL TO THE WORLD.

FAREWELL, O World ! The time is near
When these dim eyes must close
On all the scenes that please me here,
And wrap me in a deep repose.

The sun that burns along the skies
No more shall I behold ;
In vain for me the moon shall rise,
The stars display their lamps of gold.

The hills shall darken to my view,
The valleys be no more ;
On meadows gemmed with morning dew
A thick, enshrouding night shall pour.

To all the flowers that round me bloom
My senses shall be dead ;
I shall not catch their rich perfume,
Nor mark the brilliance on them shed.

The babbling brooks, the singing birds,
I shall no longer hear ;
The voice of friends, their kindest words,
Shall be as silence to my ear.

The forms, the faces of my friends
I shall no longer see ;
The firmest friendship breaks and ends
At death's imperious decree.

The places which my feet have pressed,
I shall not tread again ;
The rooms where I have been a guest,
Can not my parting feet detain.

Need it one moment's sadness cost,
That such the end must be—
That all my senses must be lost,
And earth become extinct to me ?

My days with blessings have been crowned,
Though shadowed too with ill ;
And I to time am strongly bound
By ties that would retain me still.

But lured by yonder happier clime,
Where saints with Jesus dwell,
I calmly wait his chosen time
To bid the world a long farewell. 1888.



